



WEEK AHEAD

Seven-day details of TV and radio

Vision, the channel hopping guide



BEST WINE BUYS

Jane MacQuitty with prospects for 1994

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SUFFOLK WOMAN

The new force that will hound the Tories

Julian Critchley, page 14

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Insurance shock for victims

Worse floods to come after £60m damage

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

FLOODING in south and central areas of Britain which caused an estimated £60 million damage is expected to get worse this weekend as forecasters said rain and sleet would follow the heavy snowfalls earlier in the week.

Thousands of householders facing a new battle with rising waters, as melting snow and more rain pours into already-swollen rivers, have also been told to expect higher insurance premiums. The rise in the cost of insurance is likely to be charged on any house built close to a river. Norwich Union has announced a detailed ratings system that means higher premiums for homes at risk from flooding and landslips.

People living close to rivers that regularly burst their banks will pay more, while those in the same area but on higher ground will pay less. The average household pays £187 for cover against flood, storm and subsidence.

The National Flood Insurance

With more than 130 rivers in central and southern England close to overflowing, an insurance increase is likely for householders most at risk.

thority has predicted an acute risk of further flooding this weekend. It said that 131 rivers on flood alert were close to overflowing.

Two people died in road accidents directly attributable to the icy conditions. A 27-year-old woman was killed when the car in which she was travelling hit a wall in Wimbeldon, south London, and John Giles, 51, of Well End, Hertfordshire, died after the car he was in slid into the Grand Union Canal, in Alorton, northwest London.

Another man was pulled free. Fog and freezing temperatures brought chaos to roads throughout the country last night, and gales worsened conditions in the English Channel and Irish Sea.

Four motorists were killed on the M25 in Kent causing long delays, and a car which caught fire on the M25 in Essex blocked the motorway in both directions. The Automobile Association said that snow on the Pennines was making driving "extremely hazardous".

The areas worst hit by flooding lie along the upper reaches of the River Thames at Somersford Keynes, Gloucestershire, while an area close to the Blackwater River between Eversley and Aldershot, Hampshire, is on red alert. The Avon in Salisbury is still flooded as is the Ouse near Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire.

Forty people had to leave their homes in Chichester after the Lavant burst its banks for a second time. Pallant House in the area had to remove its collection of works by Sutherland, Moore, Piper, Nicholson and Nash after a well inside the house threatened to overflow.

Exeter is being protected by a £20 million flood defence scheme, diverting 950 million gallons of water per day from the Exe into flood relief channels. Such is the volume

of water that one of the channels is being used for the first time in ten years.

Elsewhere the aftermath of heavy rainfall is continuing to cause misery for drivers. The AA said that roads in Cambridgeshire were icy overnight, and would turn to slush today, and in north Bedfordshire floods in the Radwell and Harrold areas made some routes impassable.

In west Wiltshire, the area around the village of Slaverston is still badly affected and in Oxfordshire roads in Islip are impassable. Roads in Somerset, Sussex and Gloucestershire are also badly affected.

There was some cheer for householders in other parts of Wiltshire, and in the area around Wootton Bassett, where water levels have

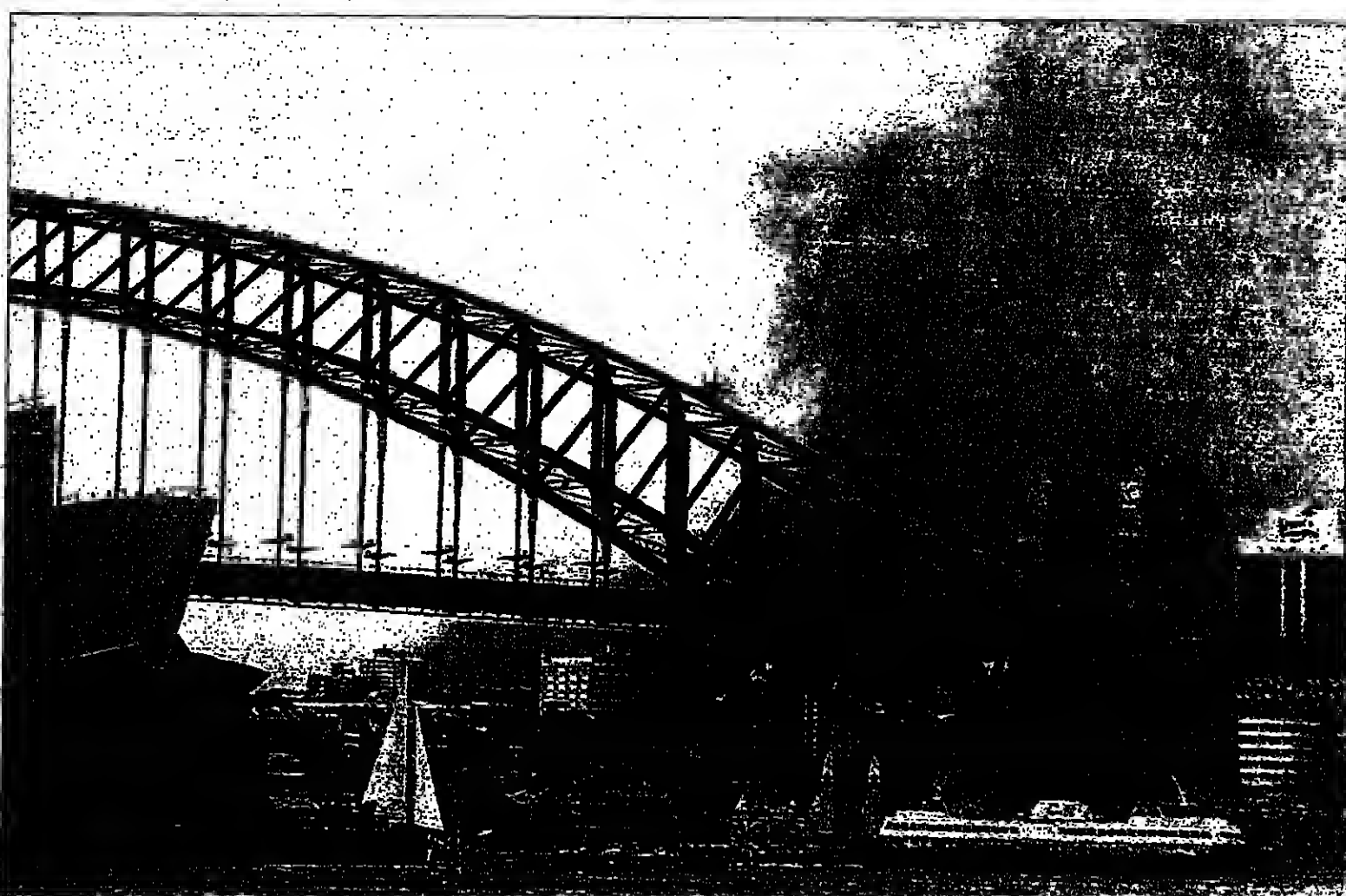
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begun to recede. Gillian Shephard, the Agriculture Minister, has ruled out the possibility of paying compensation to farmers and individuals suffering financial loss after the severe flooding in the South, but conditions may soon trigger help under the Bellwin scheme which gives local authorities 85 per cent of the cost of clearing up severe flood damage, she said.

Network SouthEast had to bus passengers between Swindon and Didcot yesterday after earth under a track slipped following heavy rain. Trains on mainline services to London Paddington were diverted at Bath and arrived at Waterloo station up to an hour later than scheduled. BR routes on low-lying bridges

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Thousands flee Australia's worst blaze for 50 years



The Sydney harbour bridge standing out against palls of black smoke as dozens of fires reached within ten miles of the city centre

Bush fires invade Sydney

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN SYDNEY

SYDNEY skies turned black yesterday as the worst bush fires in 50 years began to savage its suburban homes and consume vast tracts of New South Wales.

Last night homes were ablaze within ten miles of Sydney harbour and the city centre. One quarter of the state is now under threat with temperatures 13C above the high summer average, and the authorities say that 3,000 homes are at risk if the weather does not ease by today. Miraculously, only three people have died so far. A youth is in police custody suspected of deliberately setting at least one fire.

More than 120 fires are burning over 124,000 acres, having spread throughout the week in high winds and soaring temperatures which peaked yesterday at more than 40C. Many thousands of people are being evacuated from their homes.

More than 7,000 volunteer and professional firefighters are stretched to the limit tackling blazes non-stop in difficult mountain terrain and across coastal plains from the

Queensland border in the north almost as far as Victoria in the south.

Volunteers are flocking in from neighbouring states to help and the military is also joining the operation. Major roads and railway lines out of Sydney are being closed as the city is ringed by massive walls of fire. These are now consuming homes in the city's exclusive northern residential areas of Turramurra, Tymbly, Lindfield and Chatsworth. Flames have jumped what were thought to be secure fire

control lines and fire crews say smoke is so thick that they can only work with breathing apparatus. Looting was reported in several areas last night.

The beach lifesavers at nearby Cronulla, south of Sydney, were using their boats to rescue children from holiday camps yesterday and ABC Radio reported last night that a group of people were trapped in one blazing building.

Black Friday, page 12

Nato trip to US for Major

BY MICHAEL EVANS

JOHN Major has been invited to follow up next week's Nato summit in Brussels with a visit to Washington to see President Clinton. With both leaders in agreement on the right policy for Nato and its relations with Eastern Europe, the visit will help to cement the decisions made at the two-day summit on Monday.

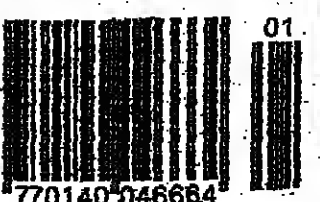
They share the view that Nato cannot yet offer membership to Eastern Europe. The cautious approach was adopted before the emergence of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy as an extremist political figure in Russia and President Yeltsin's warning that alliance expansion would isolate Russia, provoke nationalist fury and undermine his reform programme.

Mr Clinton will be bringing to the Brussels summit his proposal for a Partnership for Peace with the countries of the former Warsaw Pact.

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Kidnapping father jailed for 18 months

BY EDWARD GORMAN

PETER Malkin, the businessman who abducted his son Oliver from France and took him to Egypt, was sent to jail yesterday for 18 months for contempt of court.

Ignoring pleas even from the boy, 12, who wrote a letter on his father's behalf, Sir Stephen Brown, president of the Family Division, said the courts could not possibly overlook what he called "such gross, calculated and deliberate defiance". The judge told

Malkin, 54, who sat in the High Court arm-in-arm with Audrey Donnelly, 45, his girlfriend who accompanied him to Egypt. "You acted in abducting the child following two previous abductions for which you have not suffered a particular penalty but these are matters which cannot be overlooked."

"It is quite plain that you set out on the deliberate course of abducting this child and seeking to take him to a place apparently beyond the reach of this jurisdiction," the judge said.

He added the offence was a matter which struck at the very root of the rule of law. Noting that Malkin had finally come back from Egypt on Thursday and allowed his son to be returned to his mother's care at her home in France, he then sentenced him to just six months short of the maximum two years available for a contempt. Mrs Donnelly's case for alleged contempt is to be heard next week. She remains free from custody until then.

Malkin, of Bridge, Kent.

wearing a light green wollen suit after spending his first night back in Britain in the cells at Charing Cross police station, broke down when an old friend moved forward from the back of the court to offer him his sympathy. As he was led away to prison, he shouted: "I love Oliver. I wish him the best. Send all my love to Oliver - just my love."

Outside his brother, Peter Malkin, expressed fears for his health in prison and said they would appeal against the sentence. He accused the

judge of having ignored the interests of the child by imposing a custodial sentence. "What effect is this going to have on Oliver? I thought they were looking after Oliver's welfare but all they are interested in is Peter's punishment."

During his pre-sentencing remarks the judge did address this point when he referred to a report on the boy by a child psychiatrist who examined him on the instructions of the Official Solicitor during a visit

Continued on page 3, col 5

Yeo 'hammering last few nails into political coffin'

BY JILL SHERMAN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Yeo warned against resignation speech

TIM Yeo was given a blunt warning last night by senior Tories to "keep quiet" and to abandon a resignation statement in the Commons to have any chance of salvaging his political career.

The message, which was echoed by senior government officials, followed Mr Yeo's angry attack on Aline Horgan, a Tory mayor in his constituency, for her role in his downfall. Mr Yeo, who resigned this week as Envi-

ronment Minister over his affair with a Tory councillor which produced an illegitimate daughter, said that Mrs Horgan's letter urging the Prime Minister to sack him had sparked the campaign to oust him. Several senior Tory backbenchers felt yesterday that Mr Yeo was steadily hammering the last few nails into his political coffin. News that he has already given another interview to appear in the Mail on Sunday tomorrow astounded MPs.

His outburst in the Daily Express against Mrs Horgan appeared to be hastening his chances of deselection in his Suffolk South constituency. The comments are likely to lead to more calls for Mr Yeo to step down when he goes before a constituency extraordinary meeting next Friday.

His prospects of returning to Government could also be jeopardised. Well-placed government sources made clear that Mr Yeo would do himself few favours if he went ahead with a resignation statement in the Commons next week. Sir Archie Hamilton, the former Defence Minister, said

Mr Yeo should be trying to win the confidence of his constituency. "That should be done by building bridges rather than launching an embittered attack on whoever he thinks is responsible for his downfall," Sir Archie said. In yesterday's Daily Express, Mr Yeo denied that he had been a great crusader on the issue of single parents.

Yeo's outburst, and Peter Riddell, page 2
Simon Jenkins and Julian Critchley, page 14
Leading article, page 15

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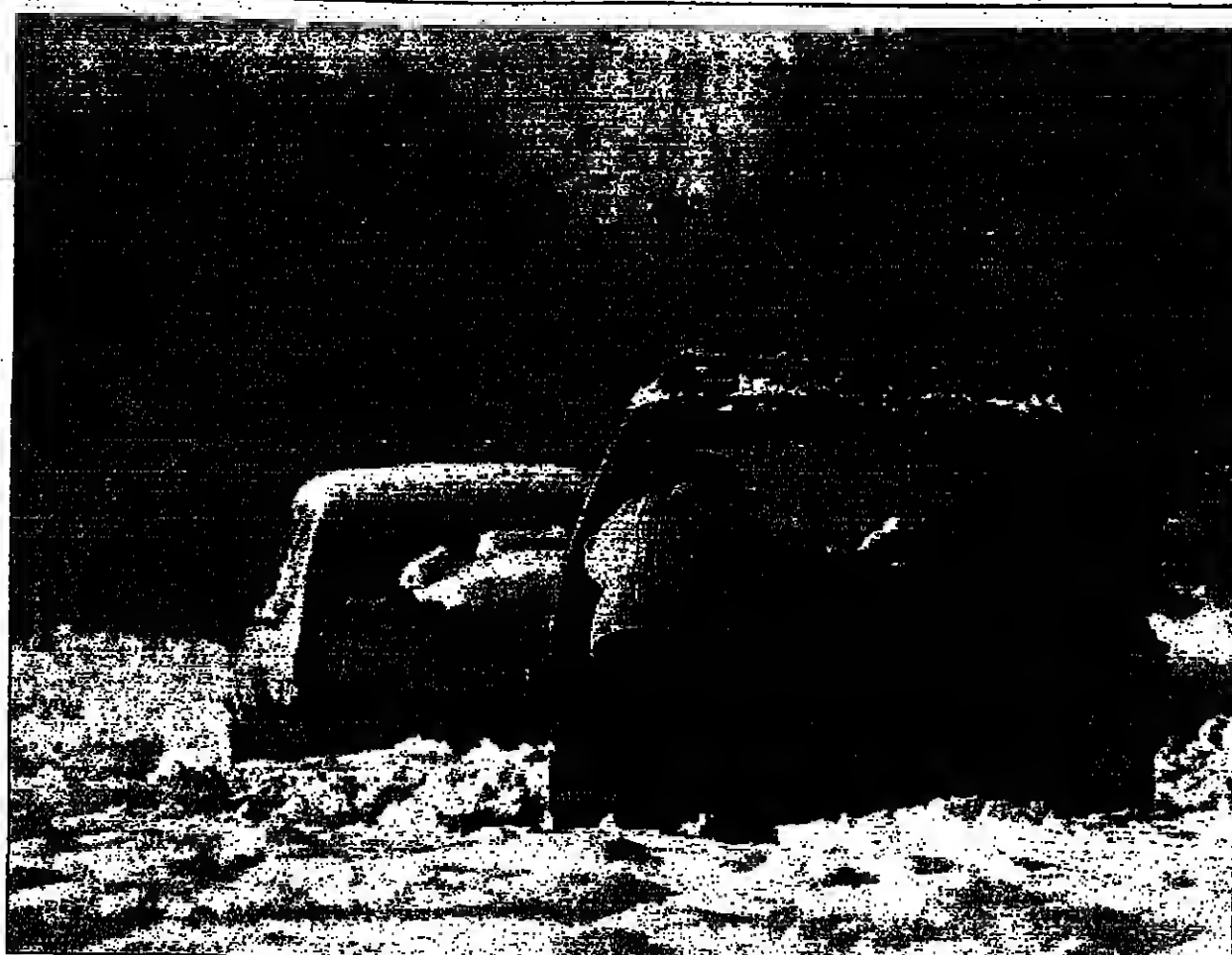
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A couple struggling to push their car out of snow on the A31 near Alton in Hampshire yesterday, while the view of the county from the air is a blanket of white. Rain and sleet are likely to cause more trouble this weekend



Weather wreaks death and destruction across Europe

Continued from page 1

at Looe, Cornwall and Barnstaple, Devon, were suspended while divers checked water damage, and on the Cambrian line between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth a bridge at Welshpool was damaged by rising levels in the Severn.

Police on the Isle of Wight said roads were now passable with care after hundreds of people had been stranded on Thursday due to the heaviest snowfalls on the island in ten years.

Seven schools on the island were closed, as were many throughout southern England.

Several people were killed as blizzards, high winds and torrential rain lashed western Europe. There

was havoc on the roads and seas, and dozens of people were forced to flee their homes.

A 12-year-old boy was swept away in southeast France yesterday when a rain-swollen river carried off his mother's car. The mother managed to escape but the boy was feared drowned.

If confirmed, his death would be the seventh attributed to the severe weather which has hit much of France since before Christmas.

In Portugal, high winds whipped the Atlantic into waves up to 16ft high, closing many ports and forcing the crew of an Italian gas carrier to abandon ship in the Straits of Gibraltar.

All 17 crew members were rescued

but officials said the ship, which was abandoned when water flooded the engine room, might have sunk.

Snow fell as far south as Andalusia in Spain and the Algarve in Portugal; avalanches closed roads in the Italian Alps and warnings of snowslides were issued in the Pyrenees on the border between France and Spain.

In Lisbon, high winds brought down a circus tent. The 6,500ft high Serra de Estrela mountain range in central Portugal was covered with snow, and many roads were blocked.

In southwestern France, many towns remained under water and rain fell on the Atlantic port of Bordeaux for the 23rd consecutive

day. The city has received more than one third of its average annual rainfall in the past month.

Roads in southeastern France were closed and authorities urged people to stay at home and drink only bottled water.

The storms reached North Africa where winds lashed Morocco's northwestern coast from Rabat to Tangier. At least two people were killed when a palm tree crashed on to their car, and 20 were injured.

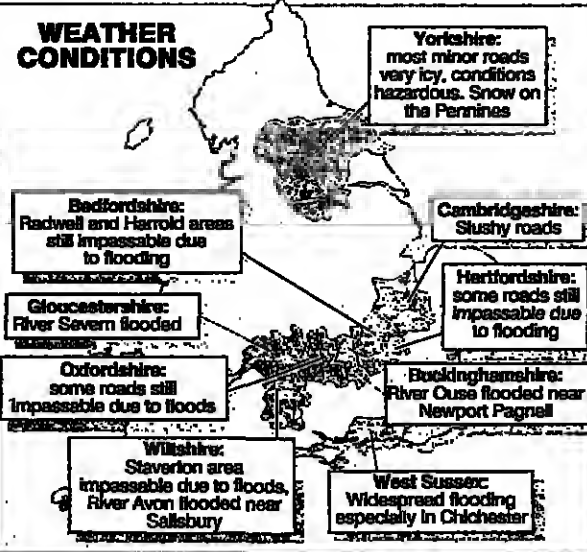
In Austria, the problem was not the cold. Unseasonably warm winds ripped off roof tiles and blew down power lines. Ski lifts were halted and roads were blocked by fallen trees and power pylons. The Austria Cup snowboarding champi-

onships scheduled for See in the Tirol had to be cancelled. In the Wilden Kaiser mountain range, a 20-year-old German escaped with a broken leg after being swept away by an avalanche.

In the German tourist towns of Zell and Cochem on the Moselle, people again paddled boats through streets that were flooded for the third time since early December.

The Rhine was closed to commercial shipping from Koblenz to Cologne, as was the Moselle from the French border to Koblenz.

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Police alert ports as man disappears with sons

By EDWARD GORMAN



Sam, left, and Andrew were staying with their father

A NATIONWIDE search is under way for a father who failed to return his young sons to their mother and might have taken them abroad.

Ian Sharp, 41, an unemployed labourer, has not been seen since he failed to return the boys Andrew, 8, and Sam, 6, to his former partner's home near Cardiff on Monday.

South Wales police have alerted forces across the country and at air and sea ports. Relatives of the family in London have also been contacted.

Chief Insp Viv Baldwin, who is leading the hunt, said: "It is possible that he intends to take the boys abroad and we have circulated their descriptions to airports. We are anxious to trace Mr Sharp so that we can assure ourselves that the children are safe and well."

Last night the boys' mother, Nicola Saunders, 32, of Creigiau, said she was very concerned for their safety and was glad that the media had taken up the case. She said she raised the alarm after Mr Sharp, of Splott, Cardiff, failed to return the children after an extended visit to him over the new year. Ms Saunders described her former partner, with whom she split up after nine years in October 1992, as unstable and unpredictable.

"I don't know where they are," she said. "I'm glad at last it's going out to the press because at least then he won't be able to move them if he's in this country," she added.

Ms Saunders said Mr Sharp had gone off with the boys once before in October 1992 when he took them to London on an unauthorised trip that lasted ten days. Police were alerted and they

were safely returned. After that, she had gone to court where she gained sole care and control of her sons while Mr Sharp was granted reasonable access. He had been seen then once during the week and on Saturdays and Sundays.

Ms Saunders added that at the time of the hearing Mr Sharp was warned by magistrates that he could face imprisonment if he again attempted to go off with the children.

Her fears that he may have gone abroad have been heightened because she believes Mr Sharp now has about £8,000 on him from the sale of their former home. He also has the boys' names listed in his passport. Ms Saunders also says she cannot find their birth certificates.

Mr Sharp is described as 5ft 9in tall with copper brown bushy hair and glasses. Andrew is 4ft 3in and has light brown hair, blue eyes and is quite chubby. Sam is slimmer, 3ft 6in, with sandy hair.

Ms Saunders said Mr Sharp has a variety of the boys' clothes with him.

Father jailed, page 1



Ian Sharp: did not return sons to their mother

Malkin is faced with bill for £100,000

Continued from page 1

to France last summer. He had described the boy as "sensitive, vulnerable and needy" - colloquially, in a mess.

Costs were awarded against Malkin, who has also to pay costs for hearings in his absence when sequestration orders were made against his assets, including his home near Canterbury and a hotel in Devon. His barrister said his bill, including the costs of the sequestration now suspended, was close to £100,000.

Peter Jackson, for Malkin, said his client admitted the contempt. But he argued that a final decision on the case should not be taken until a hearing scheduled for February 7 when Malkin is due to apply for care of his son or, alternatively, right of reasonable access.

Mr Jackson described Malkin as a warm-hearted and generous man who could also be obstinate and impetuous. He said an otherwise respectable and law-abiding individual had allowed his strong emotions for his son and his frustration at not being able to see him, to get the better of him.

After the hearing the Official Solicitor conveyed the judge's gratitude to the media for helping in the search for the boy by giving the case massive publicity. But he also asked that Oliver Malkin now be left alone. "It is very important for Oliver's well-being that he and his family should be left in peace to resume a normal family life in France," he said.

Mr Malkin is under a summons to appear in court on January 31 in the Breton city of Lorient for the kidnapping near his mother's home. If convicted, France could seek his extradition.

Young drivers learn the art of lower insurance bills

By TIM JONES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

YOUNG drivers are to be offered lower insurance premiums if they agree to pay for additional tuition after passing the driving test.

The voluntary scheme, which will be announced next month by John MacGregor, the Transport Secretary, is part of the Government's drive to tackle the destruction caused by aggressive, over-confident young motorists.

Drivers in the 17 to 21 age group represent 10 per cent of licence holders but are involved in 20 per cent of accidents. Each year in Britain, more than a thousand people die in incidents involving at least one young driver.

One transport source said

yesterday: "The trouble is that many of them are over-confident and think they are Nigel Mansell. Once people have passed their test, they need to learn to drive properly. Basically, they have to be taught in no uncertain terms that misused, a car is a potentially lethal weapon."

The five-hour courses would involve aspects of driving not covered by the test, such as motorway driving, driving in hazardous conditions and at night.

Although the additional course would cost up to £150, some insurance companies have indicated they are willing to offer discounts of £200 or more to young motorists who

volunteer. Premiums of up to £1,000 are not unusual for newly qualified young people.

Furthermore, young drivers who have not taken the additional driving tuition could be stripped of their licences if they commit certain traffic offences within two years of passing the test and be forced to take a much tougher test before being allowed back on the roads.

Motorising organisations and road safety campaigners have for some time criticised the present driving test because it enables young motorists who have just passed the test to drive at high speeds on motorways from which they are banned while learning.

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QC backs Ambridge One

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Ambridge One, jailed for six months for conspiring to pervert the course of justice, should not have spent one night behind bars, an eminent barrister said yesterday.

Anthony Scrivener QC, a former chairman of the Bar, was concerned that Susan Carter, the fictional character whose sentence is the talking-point of BBC Radio 4's *The Archers*, had been ill served by her counsel. The script had her sent down before Christmas for helping her brother evade police after his part in an armed robbery.

Carter's legal advisers should have applied for bail as soon as sentence was passed, Mr Scrivener said. They could then have applied for an appeal hearing on the ground that her sentence was inappropriate. "I have had many clients sentenced on a Monday,

applied for immediate bail, and had them before the Court of Appeal by Wednesday. The storyline suggests Susan Carter will be out before an appeal can be heard. That is unfair to the judicial system."

When it was suggested to Mr Scrivener that Carter could in any case probably not have afforded a barrister of his calibre, he said: "Nonsense. In a case like hers, with Christmas coming up and two children left in the care of their father, she would have had no trouble finding a member of the Bar to represent her at appeal for nothing. Had she been on legal aid, she would have been covered for an appeal."

Posters demanding the release of Carter, originally issued by a pressure group in Kent, have now appeared in Yorkshire.

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Publishers join queue for stake in Independent

■ Mirror Group Newspapers has emerged as favourite among six groups interested in rescuing Fleet Street's ailing broadsheet

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

AT LEAST six major publishing groups have signed confidentiality agreements with Newspaper Publishing, owner of *The Independent* and *The Independent on Sunday*, signalling their intention to bid for a stake in the financially troubled company.

Mirror Group Newspapers has emerged as the front-runner to take part in a rescue package for the titles in partnership with Andreas Whitam Smith, founder editor of *The Independent*. David Montgomery, Mirror chief executive, however, is also in talks with the main board of Newspaper Publishing, which is drawing up alternative financial restructuring plans for the company. The board has already received one formal, written offer from a publishing group — believed to be Tony O'Reilly's Irish Independent Newspapers — as well as a number of telephone offers from other press organisations.

The bids for a stake in the company are believed to vary widely, valuing it between £40 million and £80 million.

The Daily Telegraph Group, Associated Newspapers, publisher of the *Daily Mail*, and United Newspapers, which owns the *Daily Express*, have all signed confidentiality agreements with Newspaper Publishing in the past few days to give them access to the company's financial details. Mr Whitam Smith, who is also a shareholder in Newspaper Publishing, is poised to publish details of his rescue package next week. It will transfer ownership of the two Independent newspapers to a new holding company, granting the Mirror Group — or an alternative Fleet Street publisher — a 25 to 40 per cent stake.

Under the deal, the two main present shareholders of Newspaper Publishing, *El Pais* of Spain and Italy's *La Repubblica*, would jointly own about 50 per cent of the new company.

The remaining institutional shareholders in Newspaper Publishing are likely to be offered cash or shares for their

holding by the new company. Although there is considerable momentum for a swift settlement of the long-simmering problems at the Independent newspapers, any single rescue package is unlikely to be considered by the full board of Newspaper Publishing, which is scheduled to meet next on January 27, before a number of alternative firm offers have been received.

The outcome is by no means certain. Newspaper deals are notoriously unpredictable and subject to a degree of personal and emotional factors unheard of in other industries. Mr Montgomery has already indicated his intention to diversify the Mirror's interests into new media markets, such as cable or satellite television. A stake in a broadsheet newspaper would create new opportunities for cross-promotion of the company's products and may also help increase its kudos.

An alliance between *The Independent* and *Daily Mirror* titles would reduce the unit costs of all their publications. It would provide the two companies with shared office space at the Mirror's new premises in Canary Wharf, east London, and joint printing, distribution and backroom facilities. As the Independent and Mirror titles have distinct target markets, such a deal would be less likely to raise complications from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission than one with another broadsheet publisher, such as the Daily Telegraph Group. Although Mr Montgomery has helped to restore the financial fortune of the Mirror Group, it remains unclear whether he has the editorial and management acumen necessary to help to revive a broadsheet newspaper publisher.

Conrad Black, chairman of the Daily Telegraph Group, however, does have an established track record in this field.

Under his control, *The Daily Telegraph* has remained one of Britain's most successful newspapers with weekday sales of more than one million.



Whitam Smith: to publish rescue plan



Montgomery: in talks with board



Sam Holland, assistant at Charbonnel et Walker, where there is increasing interest in quality chocolates

Chocoholics seek love at first bite on quality street

By KATE ALDERSON

AFTER a bumper Christmas for sales of confectionery, up by 10 per cent, Britons' taste buds are hankering after high-quality designer chocolate.

Britons spent an unprecedented £3 billion on chocolate last year, according to research released by Cadbury yesterday, making the nation the fourth largest consumer of the product worldwide. The Netherlands heads the list, closely followed by Denmark. The United States languishes in twelfth place.

Chocolate has become one of the few affordable luxuries, Cadbury said. "While cautious spending was still evident in other market sectors, consumers were not only continuing to indulge in their favourite chocolate sweets but actually bought more than ever before," a spokesman said.

The Chocolate Society, based in Otley, West Yorkshire, has 3,000 members worldwide who support the

notion of a high-quality product. Nicola Porter, its director, said: "More and more people are looking for a different type of chocolate with a good taste, not just sugary. They are increasingly keen on the quality chocolates which have a cocoa solid content of between 50 and 85 per cent." Ordinary chocolate bars have a cocoa solid content of about 22 per cent.

Betty Foxton-Morris, manager of Charbonnel et Walker's store in Bond Street, central London, said novices and experts alike were showing increasing interest in quality. Its chocolates sell for £16 a pound and £18 for a pound of truffles.

Chantal Coady, owner of Rocco chocolate shop in Chelsea, west London, was a founding member of the Chocolate Society three years ago. "I have been campaigning for a quality product for a few years now and it appears to be working. We are selling twice as much now as we did six months ago."

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'Wretched' driver gets six months

By A STAFF REPORTER

A MAN described as Britain's worst driver was jailed for six months yesterday for his 36th offence of driving while disqualified.

Jeremy Smith, 30, who last year had a 30-year driving ban cut to 15 years, was stopped as he drove through Leicester in November.

Yesterday his solicitor, who once said that Smith was the country's "worst and most wretched driver" pleaded for leniency. Oliver D'Sa told Leicester magistrates: "I accept my client has a shocking and deplorable driving record, but his last offence was in December 1992 — he has thus been out of trouble for a year. At the time of this latest offence he was stone-cold sober, a remarkable achievement, and did only drive a very short distance."

The court decided, however, that Smith had disregarded his last chance. When his driving ban, imposed for a 14th drink-driving offence, was halved he also had a six-month jail term quashed.

Smith, of Leicester, admitted driving while disqualified and without insurance. The court ordered that the 1978 Ford Granada that he was driving be forfeited.

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Catholics back politically correct style of catechism

BY RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

LEADING Roman Catholics in Britain last night defended the English translation of the first new catechism for more than 400 years, and urged the Vatican to allow the politically correct language to stay.

Bishop David Konstant of Leeds, the only Briton on the international team of experts who compiled the catechism, said: "The concern of the translators of the catechism has been to translate the text into good contemporary English. One feature of contemporary English is the use of inclusive language when both men and women are intended. The translators have, by and large, abided by this usage."

He said the English text was at its final editing stage in Rome and was intended to be with the publisher by the end of the month.

The argument has moved beyond the catechism and to the liturgy of the church itself, which is being revised. Theologians in Britain and America want the phrase "fully human" or "truly human" to replace "man" in the Nicene

Disputes over contemporary English have moved beyond the catechism to the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church

Creed. At present it says: "He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man."

Britain's five million Catholics have had to wait for the catechism, published in its original French form in 1992, because of the debate. The Vatican has been unable to decide what, if anything, should replace "man". In a



Konstant translators used modern English

draft leaked to *The Times*, the translators have where possible used human, people and everyone instead of man. The translation at present retains the description of Christ as a man in the creed, but refers to him as human in the ensuing discussion. If no agreement is reached, the catechism is likely to retain the original word "man" in the creed, angering the politically correct lobby in America which wants inclusive language throughout.

Sister Cecily Boulding, a Dominican, who was a member of the translation committee made up of three British and three American theologians, said: "The catechism is not refusing to call Christ a man. But where it quotes the creed, the church wants to use whatever is going to be in the present translation of the creed. This is being revised."

"It is an excellent translation. A large part of the English-speaking world has

become sensitive to the use of exclusive language. Since it is common in most other walks of life to make sure we use inclusive language, it was felt the church should also make this point."

Sister Boulding, a lecturer in theology at Ushaw College, Durham, a seminary and theological research centre, said the Vatican was not refusing to call Christ "human", but was refusing to sanction truly human or fully human until the consultation process was complete.

Fr David McLoughlin, lecturer in theology at Oscott College, the Birmingham diocesan seminary, who was involved in the consultation process, said: "You cannot produce a document like this without an attempt at broad inclusivity." But he said the Vatican was concerned about "imposing on the rest of the English-speaking world an American agenda on this whole question of inclusive language".

Credo, page 8
Letters, page 15
At Your Service,
Weekend page 10



Colleagues of Daniel Bilco, 22, the Grenadier guardsman killed by an IRA sniper in Armagh last week, carrying his coffin yesterday to the church of St Michael and St Mary in Melbourne, Derbyshire. He was the first soldier to be killed in Northern Ireland since the Downing Street declaration

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Duck hunters stalk a ruddy nuisance

BY MICHAEL HORNSEY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

SHOOTING and trapping of ruddy ducks will begin next week in a two-month experiment to find the best way of controlling a bird that has become an international menace to wildfowl conservation.

Colin Galbraith, chairman of the ruddy duck working group, representing a dozen national and international conservation bodies, said: "We all now recognise that there is an urgent need to stop and reverse the spread of ruddy ducks across Europe."

The ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) is spreading from Britain towards the main breeding grounds of the much rarer white-headed duck (*Oxyura leucorhynchos*) in the south of the former Soviet Union. Conservationists fear that inter-breeding between the two could lead to the extinction of the latter.

The threat to the white-headed duck is a salutary lesson in the dangers of importing non-native species. The late Sir Peter Scott imported three pairs of ruddy ducks from North America to take part in a captive breeding programme at Slimbridge in Gloucestershire in 1948. Some

of the birds escaped, established themselves and began breeding. There are now an estimated 3,500 ruddy ducks at large in Britain and the population is growing at a rate of about 8 per cent a year.

Animal rights activists are lobbying Glasgow City Council in an attempt to prevent a seagull cull after complaints by residents that they are being kept awake and dive-bombed by the birds.

John Robins, of Animal Concern, has asked the council not to use drugged bait. He said the drugged birds would fall from the sky on to the heads of pedestrians and into the path of traffic.



The ruddy duck's success threatens related species

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

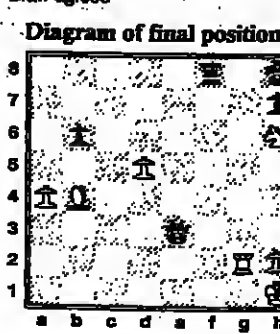
Nunn parcel

The London grandmaster Dr John Nunn fought through to one of the best results of his career by outright victory in the Hastings Premier tournament, Britain's strongest all-play-all competition. He needed to resist the challenge in the last round from his only close rival, Mikhail Krasenkov. This Nunn achieved, forcing a draw after 47 moves.

White: Mikhail Krasenkov
Black: John Nunn
Hastings Premier, December 1993-January 1994

Grainfield Defence

- 1 d4 Nf6
- 2 c4 g6
- 3 Nf3 Bg7
- 4 g3 c6
- 5 Bg2 d5
- 6 cxd5 cxd5
- 7 Nc2 Qd4
- 8 Ne5 e6
- 9 O-O Nid7
- 10 f4 B5
- 11 Nc3 Ne6
- 12 g5 Bx5
- 13 Qe2 Rf6
- 14 b3 Bd7
- 15 a4 Ne4
- 16 Bc3 Nc4
- 17 Bxa4 cxa4
- 18 Ne5 Ne7
- 19 Nc4 Bc5
- 20 Nd5 Rf5
- 21 g4 Nf5
- 22 Nc5 exd5
- 23 b4 a6
- 24 b5 bxb5
- 25 Nxb5 Rf7
- 26 Bc5 hq4
- 27 Qxg4 Bd7
- 28 Qe2 b6
- 29 Bb4 g6



After 48 Bxf8 Black obtains a perpetual check draw with 48... Qe1+ 49 Rg1 Qe4+ 50 Rg2 Qe1+

Hastings challengers

The Hastings challengers event was won by Miron Sher of Russia, who scored 7½ points from 9 and emerged in clear first place. Colin McNab of Scotland was second with 7 and both players have obtained the qualification places for next year's Premier event.

Winning Move, page 26

Hastings Final Cerebrable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Tot
1 J Nunn England	+	+	1	1	+	1	+	+	1	1	7
2 M Krasenkov Russia	+	+	1	1	+	1	+	+	1	1	6½
3 M Hennigan England	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	1	1	4½
4 M Sadler England	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	1	1	4½
5 K Arakhamia Georgia	+	+	+	1	+	+	1	0	1	0	4
6 I Rogers Australia	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	1	1	1	4
7 I Gurevich USA	+	+	1	0	1	+	+	+	+	+	4
8 M Hebden England	+	+	+	1	1	0	+	+	+	+	4
9 R Sherbakov Russia	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	1	2	1	3
10 D Barua India	0	+	0	0	1	0	1	+	0	+	3

The cerebrable above gives a complete record of the result of every game in the Hastings tournament. "+" stands for a win, "0" for a draw and "-" for a loss.

Major at jaunts f

Forgotten words from rising

UP TO P&O

P&O

Major attacks overseas jaunts for tearaways

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE Prime Minister yesterday attacked "airy-fairy theories" for dealing with criminals and said people were sick of young offenders being sent round the world at taxpayers' expense.

At a Crimestoppers' lunch at Wansford, Cambridgeshire, Mr Major said: "It flies in the face of common sense that you cut crime by appearing to reward those who have committed criminal acts."

The Prime Minister's comments came after a 17-year-old delinquent was sent on an 80-day "character-building" tour of Africa at public expense, and was arrested on suspicion of drink-driving within three days of his return.

In an exclusive interview with *The Times* the teenager, who visited Egypt, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia at a cost of £7,000, described Africa as "weird, stupid".

The victim must be considered before the criminal, the Prime Minister said, in criticising "airy-fairy theories"

As "weird, stupid": Cairo as "totally disgusting rubbish", the pyramids as "nothing special", and riding camels as "painful". He said that sometimes he thought he would rather have been in prison.

The Prime Minister told his audience yesterday: "I believe the climate is changing — changing against crime. People have had enough of some people seeming to put the criminal first and the victim second. They have had enough of airy-fairy theories. And I think they have probably had enough of some young offenders being sent around the world at the taxpayers' expense."

Mr Major claimed that the

fight against crime lay at the heart of the Government's back to basics campaign, and said he hoped that the Criminal Justice Bill, due to have its second reading in Parliament next Tuesday, would have the support of all parties.

He said: "I want to see punishments fitting the crime, and we need to have greater consistency across the country. That is why Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has brought forward his review of national standards of community sentences, and you can expect to see tougher guidelines when those are published later this year."

Mr Major said individuals could join the fight against

crime as special constables. Neighbourhood Watch helpers or by involving themselves with schemes such as Crimestoppers, which invites the public to call freephone numbers to give information about suspected crime.

There were 2303 arrests last year in the 14 police regions that have Crimestoppers, an increase of almost one third on the previous year.

West Midlands police yesterday announced that in its region 117 serious crimes, including a murder and 36 armed robberies, had been cleared up by people calling its Crimestoppers line last year.

Det Con Bob Leonard, who manages West Midlands Crimestoppers, said that although rewards were available, paid for by the Community Action Trust, most people preferred to give information anonymously rather than claim money.

Forgotten wells save London from rising risk of floods

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

DOZENS of abandoned wells of the kind that once fed the fountains in Trafalgar Square are being reopened under plans to boost London's water supplies.

The scheme is also aimed at saving parts of the Underground and buildings with deep basements and foundations from flooding and subsidence as water levels rise.

Many of the wells were abandoned in the early half of the century after demand from factories sucked the sources dry. However, with the flight of industry from London the water table, fed from the north by the Chilterns and from the south by the North Downs, is starting to return to ancient levels.

Water levels at Trafalgar Square were about 91 metres below street level in the early

1950s. Figures released yesterday show the level is now just 60 metres.

Scientists believe a ring of boreholes around the capital could be the key to managing the threat while cutting a water deficit in London amounting to 30-40 megalitres a day.

Dr Mike O'Shea, groundwater development manager at Thames Water, said the new figures indicated that groundwater levels were rising by two metres a year. At that rate some older buildings in the City, where the water table is lower than in south London, could suffer subsidence in 30 years, he said.

The project, which will take ten years, will identify abandoned or existing underground sources that are plentiful and clean enough to

justify the installation of pumping gear and connection to the mains.

More than 30 boreholes will be examined, many of them drilled by the Victorians, but some of the sites may date from the Middle Ages. Only a handful of the sites under investigation will eventually be used.

Scientists believe that some of the underground sources, particularly in central London, have too many naturally occurring salts for drinking water. Instead these might be used for irrigation or street cleaning.

Londoners consume over 2,000 megalitres of water a day. The company hopes that the boreholes and measures to reduce leaks from mains and pipes could bridge a deficit of 77 megalitres a day.

Coastal towns fall under the weather

By NIGEL HAWKES

PARTS of the South Coast are sinking by an inch every five years, geographers have found, making the towns along it more vulnerable to severe weather.

Tidal gauges in Portsmouth and Newhaven, East Sussex, have detected water levels rising by 5mm a year — or an inch every five years. Dr Janet Hooke told the Institute of British Geographers' conference in Nottingham that the change was a combination of the sea rising and the land sinking. Globally, sea levels are rising at 1-1.5mm a year, so the rest of the change must be due to land subsiding.

Dr Hooke, of the University of Portsmouth, and her colleague Malcolm Bray are looking for other long-term tidal figures to confirm the trend. They believe that the entire South Coast may be sinking. The geographers have used readings since 1962 to measure the change, but say more data are needed to be sure it is happening.

Floods along the South Coast are not common, although older parts of Portsmouth are vulnerable when the tide is especially high. "If we are right about the coast sinking, it means that the impact of severe conditions could be greater," Mr Bray said. "We can't say there won't be floods, that's an act of God. But the impacts can be controlled."

More floods, page 1



Keepers at London zoo are hoping for the patter of tiny paws this summer after their sole remaining Sumatran tiger, Mira, above, was introduced successfully to Mira from a German zoo. In anticipation of the happy event, Esso yesterday agreed to adopt the pair and fund research on the rare beasts

Arts Council 'misled' music panel

By RICHARD MORRISON, ARTS EDITOR

EIGHT members of the Arts Council music panel that reviewed the way in which three leading London orchestras are funded have sent an open letter of complaint to Anthony Everitt, the council's secretary-general.

The panel members dissociate themselves from the way in which the council handled the funding debate and claim they were misled.

They criticise the council's "disastrous handling of press information", which "allowed attention to be focused on a concept (the super-orchestra) which was not part of the panel debate". And they "deplore the anxiety and waste of

time and money that this has caused for all concerned".

After five months of turmoil for the London orchestras, the council finally announced a compromise solution in mid-December that left the funding of the orchestras much as it was before. Since then, Kenneth Baird, the council's music officer, has resigned.

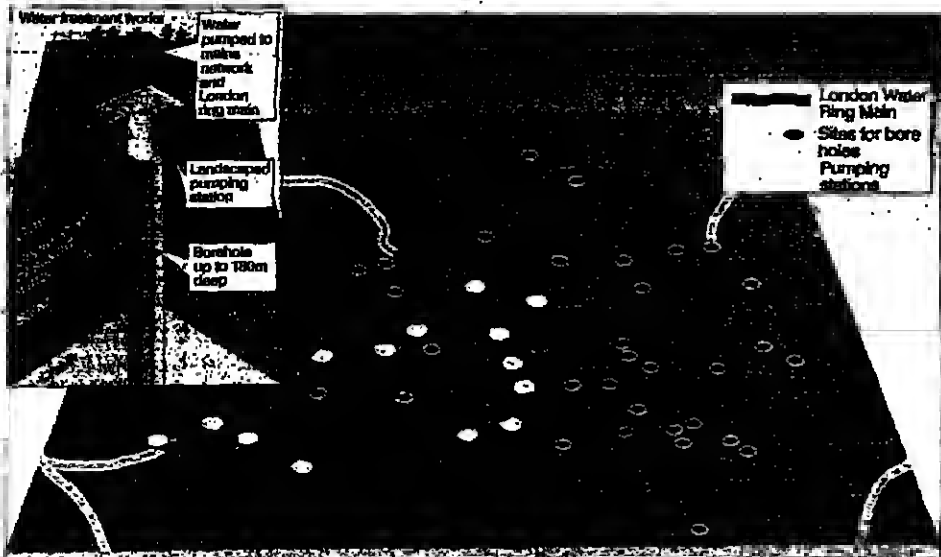
Eight panel members, including Dr Janet Rutterman, the director of the Royal College of Music, and Graham Dixon, a BBC music producer, have signed the letter which claims that the council misled the panel from the start. "The council encouraged the panel to consider a

redistribution of London orchestral funding, and appointed the Hoffmann committee to advise the council, while overlooking the fact that the council had already made financial commitments that rendered the whole exercise pointless. The crucial undertakings were not disclosed to the panel."

A notable absentee from the signatories is Bryan Magee, the music panel's chairman. The publication of such a strong letter of disapproval from within the council will undoubtedly increase the pressure on Lord Gower, the incoming Arts Council chairman, when he takes up his appointment in April.



Everitt: under fire for his handling of funds debate



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Secret of £7m auction bid goes to grave with dealer

By SARAH JANE CHECKLAND
ART MARKET CORRESPONDENT

THE dealer who bid a record £7 million for an antique calculator and then failed to pay has died in Zurich, leaving Christie's with a legal dilemma.

The death of Edgar Mannheim has also led to renewed speculation among fellow dealers that his extraordinary bid — 350 times the estimate — may have been a trick against the auctioneers.

Christie's is believed to have started taking steps to freeze Mr Mannheim's assets in an attempt to recoup the estimated £1.4 million it lost in commission. Now, after Mr Mannheim's death on Boxing Day, the auction house is considering whether to turn its attention to his estate. Mr Mannheim's most valuable asset was his fleet of classic cars, worth up to £6 million.

"There has been a sale and we maintain he should pay," Anthony Streetfield, Christie's lawyer, said. Auction law is such that the fall of the gavel constitutes a contract of sale. The calculator — a gilt and lacquered brass contraption

■ The death of a dealer who bid massively over the odds for an antique and then refused to pay has left the auction world mystified

made in the 1820s by the German craftsman Johann Christoph Schuster — is still in Christie's vaults.

Mr Mannheim had been a familiar figure on the auction circuit as a larger-than-life "Mr Ten Percent", paying huge sums for clocks and watches and then selling them on for small profits. As a result, Christie's readily accepted his telephone bids last May as they left the £20,000



Centre of attention: the 1820s calculator

estimate some £6.98 million behind.

Afterwards, the company's executives reassured enquirers that the sale was genuine, and that the money had been paid. It emerged later that this was not the case. Mr Mannheim was quoted as saying he had no intention of paying.

With Mr Mannheim's death the full story of the auction may remain a mystery. "It's very curious," said Sebastian Whitestone, one of Mr Mannheim's erstwhile rivals. "Usually the trade finds out sooner or later what has happened. Here, to a man, it is mystified. The one thing Mr Whitestone was sure of, however, was that there was no way in any circumstances that the calculator should have fetched £7 million.

The theory that the bid was a joke is fuelled by the fact that if Mr Mannheim had been engaged by a client to bid a

huge sum, he would have had a written contract. If that client had then got cold feet, Mannheim could have sued him. The notoriously gossipy art world has heard no whisper, suggesting that there never was a client.

Professor Bernhard Korte, of the Forschungsinstitut für Diskrete Mathematik, a mathematics research centre in Bonn, was bidding at the auction, but his budget was £250,000 and it is assumed he dropped out early on.

Mr Mannheim might have been both bidder and underbidder, operating on the telephone and through a stooge in the room, in a flamboyant swansong intended to spite Christie's.

"He was mentally unbalanced, forcing himself to try to do business when he was not responsible for his actions," said Eric Grouse, a dealer and lifelong friend of Mr Mannheim. "His wife was very worried."

John Baddeley, Sotheby's scientific instrument expert, admitted: "He was a great egotist and refused to be beaten. He always was a difficult client."



Joanne Whalley-Kilmer and Timothy Dalton together in London yesterday

Stars ready for wind of change

By EMMA WICKINS

TIMOTHY Dalton is not over-impressed with the qualities of Scarlett O'Hara. Which might prove difficult tomorrow when the former James Bond star begins filming the sequel to *Gone With the Wind* opposite Joanne Whalley-Kilmer's Scarlett.

Dalton, who plays Rhett Butler, was introduced to his co-star in London yesterday. Dalton, moustache in place, said of his beloved's character: "She's very mercurial and there are a lot of qualities in her I wouldn't like at all."

Whalley-Kilmer, 31, who beat out competition for the title role from rivals including Julia Roberts, star of *Pretty Woman*, was not put out. "It's a very sexual relationship, so we do have sex scenes," she promised.

The television mini-series, called *Scarlett*, has a budget of £27 million and will be shown in November.

Whalley-Kilmer admitted to some qualms at taking on Vivien Leigh's role. "I was nervous, but it's a wonderful role and I would be crazy if I didn't do it," she said.

Drivers step on gas for car of future

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

THE age of the gas-powered car, which could be refuelled from a tap in the home similar to the one connected to the domestic cooker, is only a few years away.

Up to 200,000 cars fuelled by natural gas could be on the roads by the year 2000, British Gas believes, as local authorities, car companies and private motorists search for ways of cutting pollution.

Cars using conventional four-cylinder internal combustion engines can be fired with natural gas with only minor adaptations and with little effect on performance.

Natural gas has two important advantages. It is cleaner than petrol or diesel engines, emitting 30 per cent less carbon dioxide, 70 per cent less carbon monoxide, no lead and almost no sulphur or particulates — the soot particles spread by diesel engines.

It also requires no dedicated filling stations. Although

British Gas has opened a series of filling stations across Britain for the first company vehicles to use natural gas, future refuelling could be via the home gas tap.

British Gas says natural gas can be used to power conventional petrol and diesel engines — with modifications costing an average of £1,500. The company is testing about 300 vehicles capable of running on either petrol or gas or a mix of diesel and gas and estimates gas is about 30 per cent cheaper per mile than unleaded petrol.

Researchers are initially working with companies that operate from their own fleet compounds to ease refuelling problems.

However, Tom Gorman, in charge of the Natural Gas Vehicles Project, said: "It will not be long before home refuelling apparatus can be installed to make for the ultimate in practicality."

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Credo Why faith steers clear of details

John Wijngaards

Chesterton once rightly remarked that the modern world is filled with people who hold dogmas so strongly that they do not even know that they are dogmas. One such dogma is that incarnation — God making contact in human form — is unthinkable. The recent discussion on the magi will have strengthened the bias, for it is on factualities such as did the magi exist, did they visit the newborn Jesus, that the credibility of Christian belief is perceived to rest.

Let us look at the facts. The story of the magi in Matthew's gospel is a theological reflection known as a *midrash*. Matthew finds seven prophecies that tie the Messiah to specific localities: Bethlehem (Micah 5.2), Judah (Numbers 24.17), Jerusalem (Isaiah 60.1-7), Egypt (Isaiah 11.1), Ramoth (Jeremiah 31.15), Galilee (Isaiah 9.1-2) and Nazareth (Isaiah 11.1). Employing a form of meditation, he weaves an account in which the newborn saviour touches on all these places. Yet in Matthew's view, Christ transcends all of them.

Where does God-with-us belong? Or rather, to which race does he belong? Here Matthew takes his cue from the vision in Isaiah 60. A light shines on Zion when kings ride in from the East, bearing gifts. Foreigners throng to join God's people and build a new Jerusalem. Here Matthew sees the answer. Christ was born to be God's healing hand for every human being. In putting the magi centre stage, Matthew anticipates the end of his gospel: "Go out to the whole world! Make disciples of all nations!"

Of course, we can still research the factual basis of a visit by wise men. Persian

astrologers were the scientists of their time. The passing of Halley's comet at around 8BC may have sent them on a flurry of expeditions to explore its cause. But such detail misses the point of Matthew's reflection. He wants us to ponder the universality of the Christ event. It is this event that is historical, not details of his meditation.

Reading *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens we waste time asking if Scrooge was an actual person or if he saw Marley's ghost. In Dickens's account this is not to the point. Dickens warns the Scrooge in each one of us that we will ruin our lives if we do not learn to be human and to give.

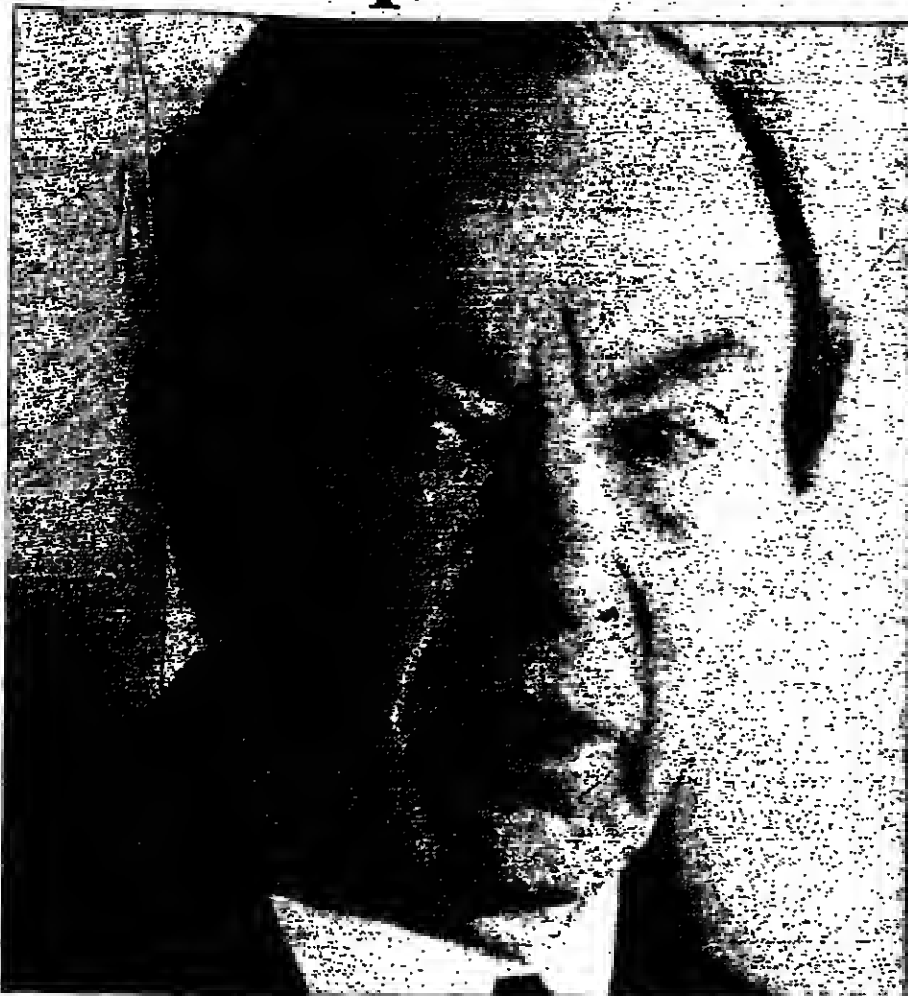
Similarly, Matthew's magi teach us to go on our journey to look for God who reaches out to us, as they did. Nor does Matthew's use of an occasional *midrash* brand his gospel as unhistorical. Chesterton's Father Brown stories do not dismiss his political satire or his biographies as fiction. Matthew presents a reliable account of Jesus's life.

Jesus of Nazareth was not a fictional character, but a real person who changed the course of history. But, throughout his gospel, Matthew is concerned with the meaning of the facts he presents, most of all, with the meaning of incarnation. God, unspokeable mystery of mysteries, came to meet us, and still meets us, in a human image. Can't be? But then, the incredible not often truer than fiction?

□ John Wijngaards is a Roman Catholic theologian, and director of House of the Holy Spirit, which produces video courses for adult faith formation.

US will place emphasis on peace partnership strategy at Clinton's first alliance meeting

Christopher sees way of hope in foreign policy maze



Warren Christopher says Asia should get more attention, but not at Europe's expense.

Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, outlines a distinctly positive outlook for relations with Britain and Western Europe, for Eastern Europe's future with Nato, and for the Administration's foreign policy record — all issues that more detached observers of President Clinton's first full year in office might not recognise. Sitting in the ornate ante-room of his seventh-floor State Department office, rather than in a pink shirt and light-grey pinstriped suit with a bright red handkerchief, the Secretary of State was articulate and smooth despite acute laryngitis which he quelled with hot lemon tea. His mug bore the words: "Diplomacy — the ability to tell someone to go to hell so that he'll look forward to making the trip". His performance and style display much of that talent. *US News and World Report* stated this week that "Clinton's worst personal relationship is probably with British Prime Minister John Major, and the distrust runs deep", but Mr Christopher insisted that the Anglo-American "special relationship" will "always be there". This Administration's dealings with Western Europe have been dominated by nasty squabbles over trade and policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

President Clinton's foreign policy chief tells **Martin Fletcher** that, despite disputes over trade and Bosnia, the Anglo-American "special relationship" will always be just that

These issues belittled Europe even before Mr Clinton's November summit with leaders of Asia's booming economies. Mr Christopher insisted, however, that transatlantic relations were in "strong shape", that Mr Clinton would go to great lengths next week to emphasise their "health and significance", and that by the time the President had made three trips to Europe in the first seven months of this year transatlantic relations would look very different. The Secretary of State declined to recant his widely reported observation last October that American foreign policy was too "Eurocentric". He said, however, that he would "like to have it understood that I felt we had not been paying enough attention to Asia and Latin America". That balance could be redressed "without downplaying the great significance of Europe which, after all, is a trading partner of the same size as Asia and an investment partner of much larger size". He said the success of the United States and the Euro-

pean Community in finally completing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks last month bodes well for the future, and he appeared determined that Bosnia's war on Nato's doorstep should not undermine American attempts to reinvigorate the alliance next week. He sidestepped a question about new French demands for American intervention



and gave no hint of any fresh initiatives to tackle what he once described as a crucial test of the post-Cold War world's ability to cope with ethnic conflicts. Bosnia was "such an important subject I think any communiqué would be hollow without it," Mr Christopher said, but suggested that the summit would "provide us primarily with an opportunity to re-

state the willingness of Nato to do the things we said we would do". One of those undertakings was to "strangle" Sarajevo. This week alone the Serbs have killed nearly 40 residents of the Bosnian capital, but Mr Christopher said that whether Sarajevo was being "strangled" was a matter of judgment. In some ways the situation was clearly deteriorating, in others it was improving. It was also a judgment "overlaid with consequences", because bombing the Serbs would jeopardise the relief operations that were saving so many lives. The subject Mr Clinton does want to highlight at the Nato summit is *Partnership for Peace*, the American plan to promote ever-closer military co-operation with the states of the former Warsaw Pact. East Europe's new democracies have been pressing for swift admission to Nato as protection against any revival of Russian imperialism. Mr Christopher said Nato was not a social club, and should not be expanded

in a way that would weaken it militarily. He predicted, however, that the summit would offer firm assurances that the alliance would eventually accept and welcome any state that demonstrated it could "pull its car".

Mr Christopher disputed the idea that the Administration's foreign policy had inspired little confidence abroad. It had been right on the big issues of global trade and support for Russian reform, and had advanced the Middle East peace process, he said.

The United States might be pulling out of Somalia with no settlement in sight, but its intervention had saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Haiti had lacked democracy for 200 years, and "the fact that we have not solved it in 11 months should not be recorded as a failure". Bosnia was "clearly an unsolved problem and a great frustration for all of us," but "much good has been done" in the way of humanitarian relief.

"I hope people will take confidence from our overall performance," Mr Christopher said, but one suspects many Europeans will be suspending judgment until next week when they get their first close look at Mr Clinton and his most senior diplomat.

Major visit, page 1

Eastern bloc must change its habits before joining club

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, at its summit starting in Brussels on Monday, will effectively close its doors to new members from Eastern Europe for about five years. Political sensitivities and fear of Russian reprisals are not the only reasons for the alliance's cold feet. There are also practical objections. As Nato officials have emphasised, membership of the alliance is not a free ticket to an all-embracing security guarantee. A new member would be required to offer guarantees in return, including armed force capable of integrating into Nato, compatible communications, equipment, shared procedures and doctrine, and an agreed obligation to help any other member under military attack.

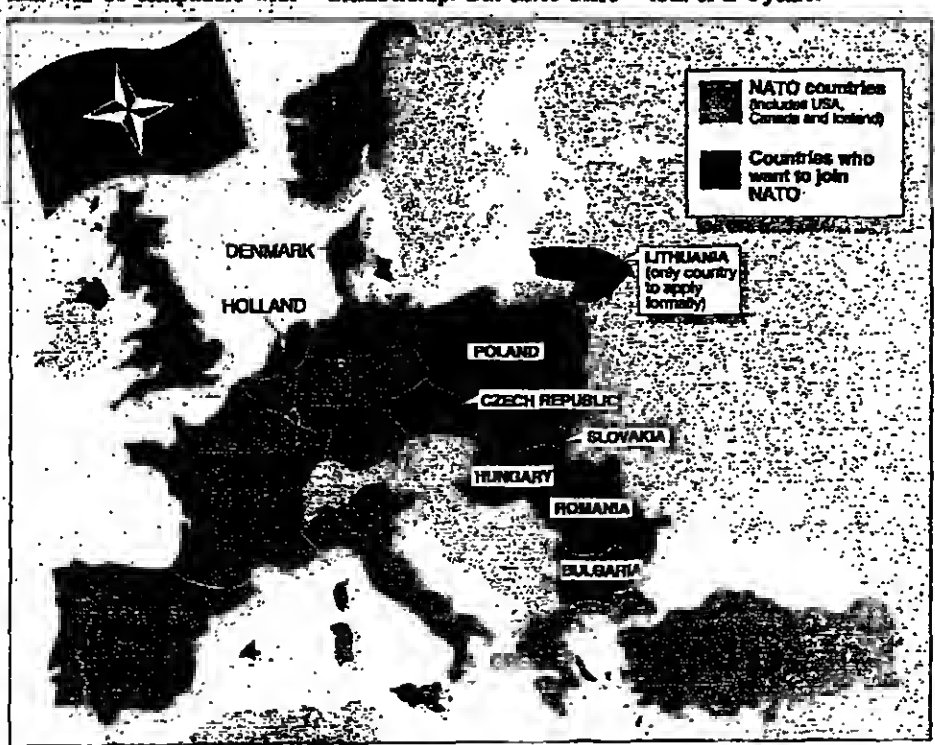
The countries of Eastern Europe are only in the early stages of restructuring their forces aimed at forming rapid reaction units. Most are not even in a position to defend their territory. It alone becoming Nato-compatible, one of the stipulations for alliance membership. A basic requirement will be an ability, at least for potential Nato staff officers, to speak English. Polish officers have begun learning the language.

Eastern European countries wishing to join Nato will also need to develop inter-operable equipment, particularly a common air defence communications system for identifying "friend or foe". This year both the Americans and the British

are planning to send soldiers to Poland, for joint training programmes. Poland, with its fine military tradition and a pledge to keep a sizable army, is the obvious first candidate for membership. Since last September, Poland, along with the three other states of the Visegrad group, so called after a co-operation meeting in Visegrad near Budapest on February 15, 1991, has also been committed to replacing certain military equipment that will be compatible with

Nato, particularly command systems. Bulgaria is interested in joining Nato but has indicated a formal application will be delayed until the evolution towards a stable democracy has been completed. In Rumania, the left to centre-left coalition is shaky and many members of the old Communist Party have stayed on in high office. Lithuania was the first of the Baltic states to send in a formal application for membership. But since there

is a substantial Russian military presence in the Russian enclave in Kaliningrad and Russian troops still in Latvia and Estonia, there is unlikely to be any hasty decision to welcome Lithuania. The fast-track candidates for membership would seem to be the Visegrad four: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. But senior Nato sources agreed that even these countries could not expect to join for at least four or five years.



Paris seeks link-up in defence

FROM CHARLES BREMMER IN PARIS

FRANCE wants the Nato summit to give its blessing to a "European defence identity" to deal with crises in Europe, such as the conflict in former Yugoslavia, independent of American participation.

This "rebalancing" of Nato will recognise the aftermath of the Cold War, says François Léotard, the Defence Minister, and will allow France to become involved again in the alliance's military planning. France plans to send its Defence Minister and top military officers to Nato meetings for the first time since De Gaulle withdrew the council from the integrated command in 1966, but the government insists it is not reversing the late President's action.

The failure of Nato to deal with the Bosnian conflict is partly pinned by French officials on the fact that America, the senior Nato partner, does not view the conflict as touching on its vital interests. France agrees with Washington that the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe should not be brought into Nato, for fear of angering Russia, but instead of America's "partnership" plan wants former Warsaw Pact states to work with the Western European Union.

President goes on trial in tour of five capitals

By MARTIN FLETCHER

PRESIDENT Clinton, having attended his mother's funeral, leaves America tonight for his first official trip to Europe during which he will meet at least 23 Presidents and Prime Ministers in five capitals over the next eight days.

It is hard to overstate the trip's importance. The President must reinvigorate a Nato robbed of its raison d'être by the end of the Cold War, and win back the confidence of Western Europe after a year of bitter disputes. He must reassure Eastern Europe's fragile new democracies that they will not be left out in the cold, and bolster Russia's reformers at a time of acute cynicism and resurgent anti-Western nationalism in that giant nuclear power.

Mr Clinton is on trial. A chaotic world desperately needs strong American leadership, but saw the new President as preoccupied with domestic problems during his first year in office. This trip gives him the chance to still those fears, and to boost his stature at home before a

monumental battle over health care reform.

First stop is Brussels, where Mr Clinton will tomorrow night spell out his vision of American-European relations in the post-Cold War era. On Monday and Tuesday he will attend a Nato summit, the main task of which is to endorse *Partnership for Peace*, Washington's answer to expanding Nato eastwards without weakening the alliance or inflaming Russia.

Next Wednesday Mr Clinton holds an unprecedented meeting with the leaders of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in Prague. On Thursday and Friday Mr Clinton will be in Moscow for four meetings with President Yeltsin, but will pointedly not meet Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist leader.

Mr Clinton's most controversial stop is in Geneva to meet President Assad of Syria, a nation listed by Washington as a sponsor of terrorism, but Mr Clinton hopes the meeting will advance Middle East peace talks.

Zhirinovskiy: to be avoided by Clinton

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How Times readers can save lives in Bosnia now

REPORT FROM TUZLA

WHOEVER IS guilty of creating the hell that is Bosnia today, Adisa Ekrem and thousands of children like her are the innocent victims.

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July 10/15/20

President's critics win loan scandal concession

■ A law the Democrats supported after the Watergate scandal may be used against Bill Clinton when his business dealings as Arkansas Governor return to haunt him

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

IN A belated attempt to counter allegations of a cover-up, Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, has decided to ask for the appointment of an independent prosecutor to investigate President Clinton's involvement in an Arkansas financial scandal.

The move comes in response to growing allegations about Mr Clinton's investment in Whitewater Development Corporation, an Arkansas property development company. The matter is being dealt with by Justice Department investigators who are trying to establish whether Madison Guaranty, an Arkansas savings and loan company, channelled fraudulent loans to Whitewater, and whether any of the funds were diverted to finance the re-election campaign in 1984 of Mr Clinton, then Governor.

A decision to seek an independent counsel will require the passage of a law by Congress to renew the independent prosecutor statute, which expired in 1992. Under that law, a three-panel court could appoint a counsel who acts independently of the Justice Department to prevent conflicts of interests. President Clinton and most Democrats supported the renewal of the law, which had arisen out of the Watergate scandal. Now with Mr Clinton the target of an investigation, Republicans in the House are dropping their opposition to the renewal of the statute, which is subject to a vote in the House of Representatives in a few weeks. The Senate has passed its version of the legislation.

Ms Reno, however, remains adamant in her opposition to appoint a "special" counsel who, unlike an "independent"

counsel, would not be subject to any legislation. Ms Reno argued that the appointment of a special counsel would only delay the investigation. "I am going to be damned if I do, and damned if I don't," she said. In an unusually harsh editorial yesterday, "Janet Reno's Shameful Delay", *The New York Times* charged that Ms Reno "seems hellbent on sacrificing her reputation to the White House's effort to contain the Whitewater Development flap".

David Gergen, Mr Clinton's special counsel, attacked the President's critics. He said: "As the President goes home to bury his mother, to have the political opposition on the warpath, hammering away, raises all sorts of questions about what has happened in this town. Where is the decency that we once had?"

Attention is shifting to whether the scandal is connected to the suicide last July of Vincent Foster, the former deputy White House counsel, who held the Whitewater files in his office. On the day of his death Mr Foster received a telephone call from a lawyer who was dealing with the Whitewater case on behalf of the Clintons. The same day David Hale, a former Clinton-appointed judge, was charged with defrauding the Small Business Administration. Mr Hale owned a company specialising in loans to the "socially or economically disadvantaged". One recipient of a Hale-orchestrated loan was Susan McDougal, the former wife of James McDougal, the owner of Madison and partner with the Clintons in Whitewater.

Double standards, page 14



Nancy Kerrigan doubling up with pain as she holds her right knee after being attacked by a man with a crowbar during skating practice

Crowbar attack on Olympic skater strikes terror into celebrity sports circuit

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

WHEN an unidentified man brandishing a crowbar attacked Nancy Kerrigan, the figure skater, in Detroit on Thursday night, he succeeded in bruising her right knee, but he may have failed to destroy her chances of competing in the Winter Olympic Games, as seems to have been his intention.

Kerrigan, 24, America's top female figure skater, was reported to be shaken by the attack, and her attacker escaped. He was observed filming the skater with a video camera and sweating profusely as she practised at Cobo Hall rink. "It could have been a lot worse," she told ABC television news. "It is not the most important thing to skate. If I cannot compete [in the Olympics] I will have to

deal with it." Last night she announced that she would not take part in the US figure-skating championship, at which she was expected to qualify for the US Winter Olympics team, but officials said she might still be able to participate in the event next month in Lillehammer.

But the damage done to a nervous sporting world, concerned about security after the knife attack on Monica Seles in Hamburg last April, may be far more critical. Oddly, for an industry which combines celebrity exposure with extreme competitiveness, sport has usually avoided the stalkers and killers that have become a grim, accepted aspect of the celebrity circuit.

Before the attack on Seles, the last attack on a sports

figure was in 1949 when Eddie Walkus, a Philadelphia baseball star, was shot and wounded by an infatuated and deranged teenager — an episode that inspired the film *The Natural*.

Athletes have hitherto been largely able to avoid bodyguards and round-the-clock protection, usually remaining accessible to fans in a way that pop stars and politicians would not contemplate. But the attacks on Seles and

Kerrigan are likely to change that, prompting not just tighter security but, inevitably, a more distant relationship with sports fans.

This could be the end of the autograph in America, of fans being able to reach out and touch their athletes. Mike Moran of the US Olympic Committee told *USA Today* after Thursday's attack: "It is bound to have a very grave effect on the future. Athletes do not want to be off-limits to

the rest of the world, but it is something we all want to think about."

As athletes have gradually been transformed into show business personalities, along with multi-million-dollar sponsorship contracts and year-round exposure, so the danger of stalking has increased dramatically. Two-time Olympic figure-skating champion Katarina Witt, for example, received more than 35,000 letters after she won the gold medal in Sarajevo in 1994, most of them adoring, some of them intimidating. A man is serving a 37-month jail sentence for threatening Witt.

Many American athletes have already started taking extra security precautions. Cal Ripken, Orioles baseball player, elected to stay anonymously in a separate hotel from his team mates last season after being accosted by an outraged fan. Other sportsmen and women have begun hiring personal bodyguards.

The US Olympic Committee is expected to discuss tighter security measures when it meets in Durham, North Carolina, next week.



Katarina Witt, left, received intimidating letters, and Monica Seles, who suffered knife attack

NEWS IN BRIEF

Afghan envoys moved

Kabul: The Afghan government is to evacuate all foreign diplomats from Kabul and move them to a safer town in northern Afghanistan, diplomatic sources here said. The government has also accepted a Pakistani appeal for a 24-hour ceasefire to evacuate foreigners and wounded Afghans, the sources said.

A lawlessness now prevails in Kabul and there is widespread looting of houses and public facilities by mujahidin guerrillas, the sources added. The government has faced rebellion from troops loyal to General Abdul Dostan, since New Year's Day. (AFP)

Troops to stay

Mogadishu: The United States will probably maintain a force of about 2,000 combat troops at sea off Somalia after March 31, when its forces are scheduled to be withdrawn, according to the commander of US forces in Somalia. (AFP)

Soldiers buried

Tehran: President Rafsanjani of Iran attended a mass funeral for 850 Iranian soldiers killed in the 1980-1988 war with Iraq and whose remains were found recently. The ceremony was held at Tehran University. (AFP)

Body removed

Brishane: A wall was removed to get the body of Kenneth Lacey, listed in the 1994 Guinness Book of Records as the world's heaviest human, from his home in Queensland, Lacey, 28, who weighed 955lbs, died of heart failure. (Reuters)

Peasants flee from bombing raids in Chiapas

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS

WHEN the bombs began to fall near the hamlet of San Antonio de los Baños, Carmelo Hernández, a 34-year-old mother of five, decided it was time to seek refuge elsewhere.

She grabbed her children and walked the five miles to the church of Don Bosco in San Cristóbal de las Casas. "There were a lot of helicopters and then the soldiers came. We don't want to die so soon," she said, kneeling on a thin blanket in a church annex where two dozen Indian families have been trying to avoid the fighting between Mexican government troops and the rebel Zapatista National Liberation Army (ZNLA).

Life in the rural Chiapas state, in southern Mexico, has never been easy, but since the Indian peasant uprising began here a week ago it has become almost unbearable.

Chiapas is better known to the world for lush jungle ruins left by the Maya Indians, the colonial churches left by the Spaniards, and the inequalities that have prevailed since the two cultures met. But even after the Mexican Revolution of 1910-17, and decades of land reform, feudal servitude remains.

Chiapas has a long history of human rights abuses against the indigenous tribes, usually over land disputes with powerful landlords who owe allegiance to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of President Salinas de Gortari.

A few months ago in the tiny farm community of Tenejapa, 11 miles east of San Cristóbal, 400 Tzeltal Indians demanded the ousting of the local political boss, "Stoastán" "El Pepi" López, who is also the mayor and local soft drink distributor.

They accused him of using violent intimidation and extortion. Police responded with tear gas and clubs, forcing many Indians to flee the town.

The PRI has tried to defuse political protest by expanding development projects in Chiapas, but it has underestimated how much need to be done.

□ Pardon offer: The government said it would consider pardoning some of the participants in the peasant uprising. (Reuters)



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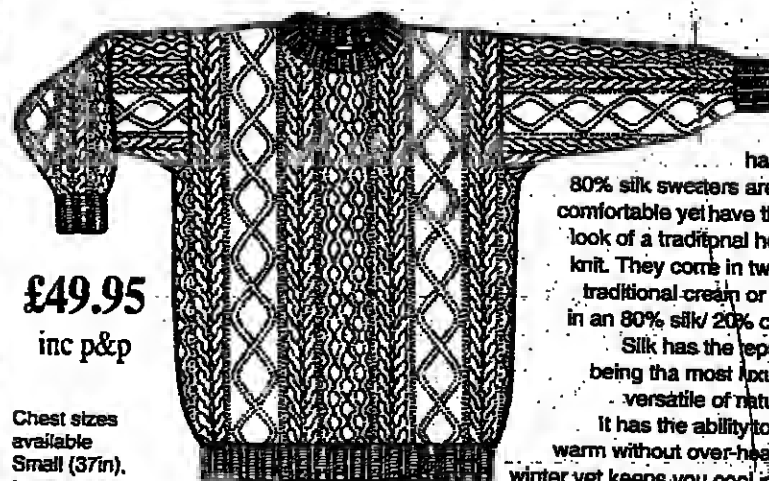
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Saudis seek delay in £20bn arms debt to American firms

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

IN a move that is sending shudders through Washington and the American defence industry, Saudi Arabia has asked for more time to pay for arms purchases worth \$30 billion (£20 billion). Falling oil prices, now at their lowest in five years, are causing cash-flow problems for the desert kingdom that once seemed to flow with unlimited riches.

Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador in Washington, chose the far from frugal setting of his Starwood Ranch, a mansion of 40,000 sq ft near the ski resort of Aspen, Colorado, to break the news to top executives from three of the biggest American defence contractors. A flamboyant figure, a member of the Saudi royal family, and reputedly one of the world's richest men, the prince gave assurances that his country would make good on all its obligations but that the schedule of payments would need to be stretched out over the next

■ Oil prices are the lowest for five years and Saudi Arabia is short of cash. Its move to delay arms payments threatens thousands of American defence jobs

few years. Saudi finance officials have arrived in Washington for talks on the new plan.

The executives who were given the gloomy news by the prince were from McDonnell Douglas, which has a contract with Saudi Arabia for 72 F15 fighters, General Dynamics, which is selling 315 Abrams tanks, and Hughes Aircraft, suppliers of a computerised air defence network.

A Pentagon statement issued yesterday, after the disclosure in *The Washington Post* that the Saudis were strapped for cash, confirmed that American officials were looking at ways to restructure the weapons sales. The statement continued: "Because of financial requirements affecting the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we must adjust the

foreign military sales programme to align it with the levels of oil-driven revenues."

Behind these bland words lies consternation among contractors and Washington officials that any cancellation or serious delay in Saudi weapons purchases could wreck profits and lead to the dismissal of thousands of defence workers. The Americans were so concerned that a delegation from the Pentagon, State Department and the defence industry flew to Aspen for a second round of talks with Prince Bandar.

General Dynamics said: "The prince assured the participants that his country's current cash liquidity problem is temporary." The Saudi Embassy said it would have no comment until Monday.



A Russian finds little happiness in prospect for this year during Orthodox Christmas celebrations in Moscow's Red Square. Another photograph, page 18

Rouble gains new currency

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA and Belorussia have agreed to merge their monetary systems by the middle of January and Tajikistan is to abandon its old Soviet currency and use new Russian rubles, it has been announced here, in a clear sign that Russia's embattled currency is making firm gains against the already-discredited new currencies introduced in most former Soviet republics.

The rush back to the rouble comes as some currencies, with unfamiliar names such as the som, dram, karbovanets and tenge are rapidly losing value, leading to soaring inflation and a paralysis in trade between the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Belorussia was the first country to abandon its local coupon, the "zaichik", or hare, which was introduced only in 1992 but now trades at five to the rouble. As the republic closest to Russia, where most of the population is still bewildered at the notion of independence, the Belorussians are keen to tie their struggling economy to Russia where inflation is falling and the rouble is virtually convertible.

Minsk hopes that a return to the rouble, now almost considered a hard currency, will bring political benefits, especially continued supplies of cheap fuel. Tajikistan, one of the poorest of the former Soviet republics and racked by civil war, is also hoping to ride on Russia's financial coat-tails.

Other countries that have revived ancient currency units have also seen them plummet. The Armenian dram fell sharply on Wednesday forcing the government to raise the price of basic commodities and services. The tenge in Kazakhstan has also fallen, although the country is rich in oil and minerals and is free of political turbulence.

The worst inflation has occurred in Ukraine, where there is the strongest opposition to ties with Moscow. The karbovanets is practically worthless. Inflation is over 100 per cent a month.

King's vassals fly to pay tribute

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

ELVIS Presley has been spotted in Dallas, And Nashville, Chicago, and 29 other cities around the United States. And what is more, he is going home, in droves.

Today would have been the King's 59th birthday and to celebrate the occasion (and live up a slow weekend turnover), American Airlines has begun offering cheap round-trip tickets to Memphis, Tennessee, and a \$20 (£13) discount to anyone who turns up at the ticket counter dressed as Elvis.



Elvis: would have had his 59th birthday today

Gate agents for the airline will judge whether passengers are sufficiently sequined, sideburned or dead to qualify, and the airline has reported a steady stream of men, women and children shimmying their way to the ticket counters.

The offer from American comes in response to an earlier Elvis promotion by Northwest Airlines, which offered single-day round trips from 32 cities to Presley's former home at Graceland, Memphis, at fares ranging from \$39 to \$99.

"If Elvis Aaron Presley shows up and does a credible rendition of *Blue Suede Shoes*," we'll show him home," said Jon Austin of Northwest Airlines. This was presumably meant as a joke, but in a country where, according to a recent survey, one out of every 32 males is an Elvis impersonator he is asking for trouble.

Not to be left out of the show, United Airlines has said it will match some of the fares and Delta Airlines is considering whether to do the same.

Every year on January 8 thousands of fans gather at Graceland, the King's taste-resistant home-turned-museum, to mourn his passing, await his return or discuss his present whereabouts. According to the latest figures, 18 per cent of Americans believe that Elvis is not dead.

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Mao era's cigarette bribes now cost a packet

Corruption among Chinese bureaucrats is endemic. Once tobacco and sexual favours were enough, but now the asking price can be cars, flats and foreign bank accounts

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

ALMOST 40 years ago, Mao Tse-tung conceded that any official could be bought with a packet of cigarettes. Those innocent days are gone; Chinese official corruption is now a major industry.

When an individual is accused, the Chinese look to see how high up he is in the official hierarchy. Every now and then a fairly high functionary, such as Li Shanyu, the Deputy Secretary-General of Hainan province, becomes an example of "beating the chicken to frighten the monkey" — a warning to those higher up. Mr Li has been sacked and expelled from the party, according to the official Chinese news agency, "for framing others, moral degeneration and accepting bribes".

More specifically, according to the report, Mr Li "led a fast life, cohabited with his mistress for a long time, and visited prostitutes, providing a very bad influence". Mr Li's disgrace, the report states, arose from a popular demand "to relentlessly ferret out corrupt elements hiding in the party and government... and expose their ugly faces and crimes to the light of day...".

More arrests will no longer suffice. Corruption in China is so endemic and prodigious that the party is spoofing Maoism to capture the attention of its hundreds of thousands of corrupt members. Years before he came to power, to justify the violence of peasants against landlords, Mao wrote: "A revolution is not like a dinner party, or doing embroidery, or such delicate tasks as that." Earlier this week the party's *People's Daily* turned Mao's aphorism on its head by saying: "Economic reform is not a dinner

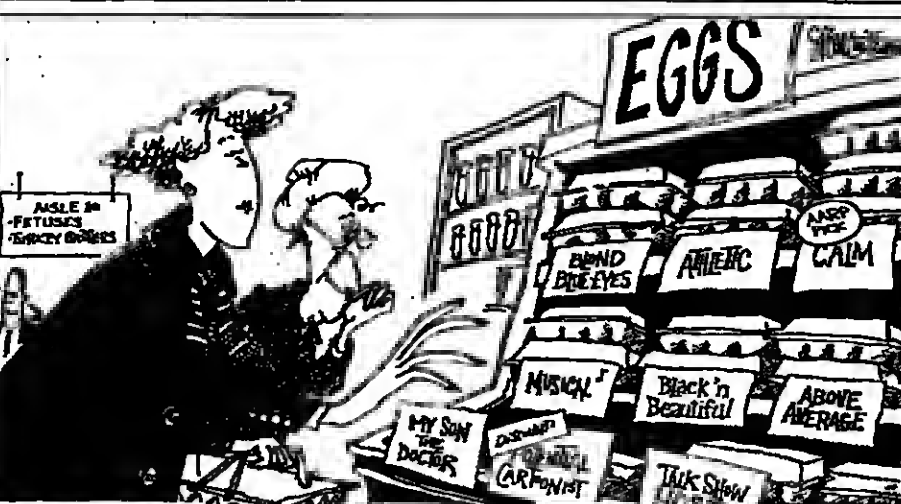
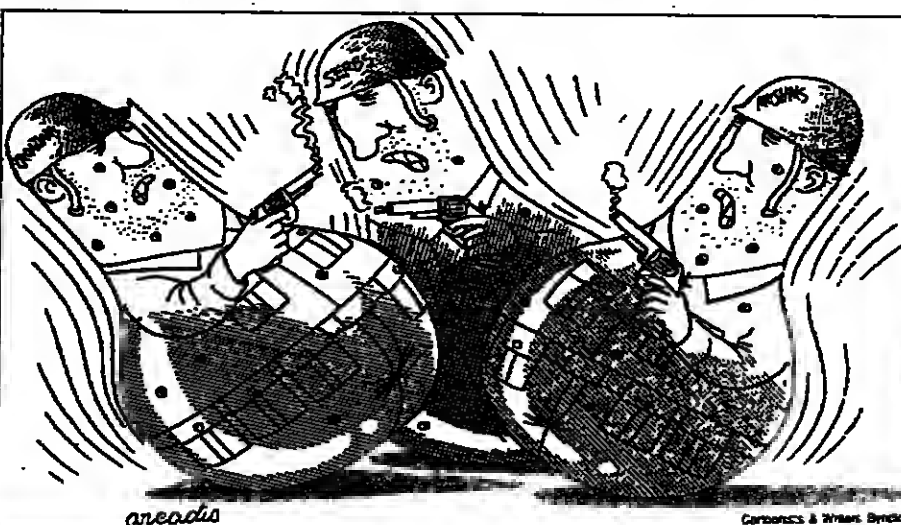
party" — a reference to the 100 billion yuan (£7.7 billion) in public funds spent annually on official banqueting and tours. This sum, the paper noted, would build China's biggest project, the Three Gorges dam in the Yangtze river. On Thursday another Peking paper, the *China Daily*, put the cost of the dam at more than 50 billion yuan, half the annual cost of cadre gorging. Several million Chinese children are too poor to attend school, the paper added, while officials eat in restaurants where one dish can cost £670. In a departure from its usual condemnation of foreign capitalists, the *People's Daily* noted that "quite a few millionaires abroad live a simple life".

The official news agency has just disclosed that 300,000 bureaucrats have stolen more than 826 million yuan over many years in one of China's poorest provinces, Anhui in the east of the country. The officials also accepted bribes, including the packets of cigarettes remarked on by Mao, prostitutes, foreign bank accounts, cars and flats. The bureaucrats used much of the money they embezzled to lend at high rates of interest, which until recently was not illegal. The report says that very few of the 300,000 officials have been prosecuted because most of them found legal loopholes to avoid charges.

China's enormous corruption, which reaches the families of the highest officials, is often blamed on the economic reforms unleashed by Deng Xiaoping in 1980, but in imperial times most officials routinely demanded bribes. The problem now is the enormous amount of money involved.

THE WORLD IN CARTOONS: GLIMPSES OF REALITY

Homo Europeanus



Clockwise from the top: Europe's history so far by Chappatte in *L'Hebdo* of Lausanne; Yasser Arafat going up in the world, as seen by Gomaa in Cairo's *Al-Ahram*; the genetic future, by Signe in the *Philadelphia Daily News*; Arcadio's view of Bosnia in Costa Rica's *La Nación*

Taking a trip on the back of a toad

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

IT IS a tale of toads and men, and one of the most powerful mind-bending drugs encountered by American drug enforcement agencies. In what is thought to be the first arrest of its kind, a California science teacher was booked last week for possession of bufotenine, a hallucinogen stronger than LSD that has to be milked from the back of a toad.

Bufotenine is produced by a gland on the back of the Sonoran Desert toad, *Bufo alvarius*, as a last line of defence against coyotes. When picked up by a coyote the toad puffs itself up with air, urinates, and finally squirts into the predator's mouth enough of the drug to intoxicate 150 adult humans.

Bob Sheppard and his wife, Connie, like parties. When the drug task force searched their house in Calaveras county, central California, they found marijuana and psychedelic mushrooms, but it was the toads it was after.

The Sheppards kept four of them, milking them once a month by squeezing the glands until they popped. They allowed the hallucinogen to crystallise by drying it on a mirror, then they smoked it in a pipe. "It looked like rock cocaine," said Agent G. "They told me when you inhale one hit of the pipe you'd better be close to somewhere you can sit down." Mr Sheppard says bufotenine is to the better known LSD as whisky is to milk.

Bufo alvarius is not rare — its habitat stretches from California and Arizona to central Mexico — but human consumption of its venom is almost unheard of in America. Rumours of toad abuse first reached Agent G last April when an informant hinted at a fad for licking toads.

Most of what Agent G knows about bufotenine he has learnt from Mr Sheppard, including that the drug was probably first used by the Aztecs. In acknowledgment of their co-operation, the Sheppards have been released on bail pending trial. Their toads are in the care of the California Department of Justice.

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Once patronised by their MPs, constituency ladies have come to rule the Tory Party with a vengeance, writes Julian Critchley

Suffolk woman calls the tune

First Essex man, and now Suffolk woman. Will the Tory party, which has been coloured by the first, now come under the thumb of the second? "Suffolk woman", as typified by Mayor Aldine Horrigan and party chairman Patricia Fitzpatrick, drove Mr Tim Yeo from office regardless of the wishes either of the Prime Minister (who played possum) and of Sir Norman Fowler (who nailed his tattered colours to the mast).

Mrs Horrigan and Fitzpatrick, formidable women in late middle life, are typical "Tory women" of the sort who are not only to be glimpsed annually at a seaside resort out of season applauding the likes of Mr Peter Lilley, but the kind of party activist who, today, runs practically every Conservative constituency association. The men have long since fled the party, leaving their busy wives to fill the posts of "chairman", secretary, and, more likely than not, the agent. In the past, Tory ladies raised the money, but did not set the tone; the flight of the men began in

the 1980s, they have come to rule the roost.

In the past, Tory women of the kind that wore peculiar hats when listening to Mrs Thatcher were usually apolitical, their skills were harnessed to bazaars and bring-and-buys, their admiration for "the Member" was unqualified. If they had views, they generally kept them to themselves, or deferred to their hearty husbands. They could be moved, but only on subjects such as crime and punishment, when *en masse* they could be as terrible as an army with banners. They were as much in favour of the rod as of the rope. Ask any Conservative Home Secretary of recent years.

I suspect we Tories patronised at Westminster the months of May, June and July were full of days in which husbands of Tory ladies, dressed to kill, sat on the terrace of the Commons guzzling

strawberries and cream, while the famous, recruited for the occasion, processed from tea-room to terrace to receive the adulation they had come to expect. Our guests were the sly footsolders of the party: today, if the Yeo affair is any guide, they have become its commanding officers.

In Wednesday's papers, Mrs Aldine Horrigan was quoted as saying, "I was an enthusiastic supporter of Tim Yeo... I did all I could to support him in 1983. He has been a good constituency MP, and repaid our faith in him, although I would have liked to have seen more of him..." The implication that Mr Yeo, however "good" a constituency MP, has been less than an assiduous supporter of Xmas fayres, fêtes and wine-and-cheese, must have brought a wry smile to the lips of Mr Yeo's parliamentary colleagues. Today, we are judged not

by our speeches but by our social skills. Harold Macmillan's dictum that the MP is the Member for Eastonsville at Westminster and not the Member for Westminster at Eastonsville, has been turned smartly on its head.

Mr Yeo has fallen victim to John Major's "back to basics", a generalised appeal, unveiled at last year's party conference, into which anyone was free to inject any "basic" tenet he or she might hold. The attack on single mothers, orchestrated by John Redwood and Peter Lilley among others, gave the undertaking a "moral" flavour which was not intended. As the English find it difficult to draw a distinction between morality and sexual mores, *corrupt blanché* was given to all those in press and public alike who believe that there is no cupboard without its skeleton: not any cupboard as large as those in the bedrooms of public men.

There has always been a Cromwellian tinge to Suffolk: Mrs Horrigan may "shoot from the hip" (the words are those of her husband), but what if her target is John Major's Government? She has also been quoted as saying of Tim Yeo, "... if the view of the constituency [she meant the Tory activists, the constituency has never been consulted] is that he should stand down altogether, I have to say that a by-election is a price well worth paying."

The mind boggles at the prospect of a spring by-election in which Mr Paddy Ashdown's Liberal Democrat candidate stands on an anti-adultery ticket against a Tory chosen presumably for her sex, age, and daunting respectability. But sadly, we will be denied such pleasures. Mrs Horrigan cannot compel Mr Yeo to apply for the Children's Hundreds, although it is certainly the case

that she, and others of her regiment, can dictate to the Prime Minister the composition of his Government.

There can be no doubt that disenchantment is widespread among what can only be a diminishing number of Tory party activists. This is due to the intractability of most of the problems faced by the Government. There is little point in listing them here, but while Michael Howard can promise to "fight" crime, he is unable to abolish it.

Many party activists lost their seats at the recent district and county council elections, and some still hanker after Mrs Thatcher's so-called golden days, and a return to "Victorian virtues" by which we thought she meant sobriety, thrift, hard work and chastity, none of which was, on examination, either common to or exclusive to the Victorian period.

Hypocrisy was the most obvious Victorian virtue.

Harold Macmillan never wore gaiters. Indeed, he once said that if the people want a moral lead, they should go to their bishops — a sentiment for which he was roundly attacked at the time. But he, too, was going back to "basics".

Mr Yeo was both foolish and unlucky. He should have resigned his office immediately. Instead, he provided news when there was none, and sport for the smug. He was cheerfully pursued across the damp fields of Suffolk by the hounds of the press and by stout parties in pink whose blood was up. And he now has to face the perils of deselection.

"Suffolk woman", unlovely perhaps, righteous certainly, is a force with which the party must reckon. She will provide the cavalry to Essex man's foot. In the meantime, and as the future dies down, I will take comfort from my dictum that the only safe pleasure for a politician is a bag of boiled sweets.

The author is a Conservative MP for Aldershot.

Ben Macintyre, in New York, accuses the American media of double standards on moral issues

No scandal here, we're Democrats

The latest accusations of philandering levelled at President Bill Clinton slipped in and out of public awareness so fast they did not even have time to earn the suffix now routinely attached to political embarrassments here.

A few hopeful souls tried to christen the episode "Troopergate", in honour of the state troopers who claimed they had helped arrange sexual trysts and then covered them up for the then governor of Arkansas. One radio host came up with the imaginative title of "Fornigate". But this was no frigate, nor even Nannygate or Gennifergate, and barely a fortnight after the charges bubbled up, they have been lost in a deluge of media silence. The troopers have been unable to find a publisher for their book of revelations. This was Damp-squiggate.

Would that this signalled a revolution in American mores and a satiation with sexual exposés, but a glance at last week's news suggests the very opposite. Actress Roseanne Arnold announced she had been a prostitute *inter alia*; alleged Hollywood Madam Heidi Fleiss revealed and then unveiled the names of some of her celebrity clients; newly-married

are at least as twisted as his facts... out-of-control... irrational... trivialising," wrote columnist Frank Rich.

In its determination to be what it calls evenhanded, the press has managed to overlook almost entirely the more serious allegation: that Clinton offered the troopers jobs in exchange for their silence.

Now this is all very high-minded. In an ideal world without hypocrisy, we would not be sorting through the dirty laundry of any politician, of whatever complexion, and the *Spectator* piece certainly had a hysterical edge. But compare the forgiving attitude towards Democrat Clinton to the ethical scolding meted out to such right-of-centre figures as Clarence Thomas, Bob Packwood and John Tower, who was found, in Senator Sam Nunn's words, to be guilty of "indiscreet conduct towards women". If the subject is Republican, it seems, the offence is rank.

When former Washington mayor Marion Barry, a Democrat, was accused on drugs charges (and convicted on one count), the press was studiously fair, some might say bizarrely generous to a man who has since been elected a council member and rehabilitated to the point where another run for mayor does not seem impossible.

Democrat Gary Hart's sexual indiscretions were exposed only because he dared the media to do so.

The excuse for not investigating — lack of corroboration — is simply untrue

The *Wall Street Journal* has been one of the few papers to point out that the widely-used justification for not following up the troopers' story — namely that it lacks corroboration — is simply untrue, particularly when compared to the meagre corroboration needed to launch all-out investigations in the past. Both *The LA Times* and *American Spectator* quote four troopers, two of them named. Watergate, lest we forget, was based on the evidence of one unidentified source.

Compare too the reaction in 1992 when George Bush was accused of having an affair with his secretary. This was one of the flimsiest stories imaginable, based on rumour, insinuation and without a single credible source, yet when it finally broke it rattled happily around the media for months.

Republicans tend to make more of their family values, so perhaps they deserve to be held to a higher moral code than their Democratic opponents, but that does not excuse the American media from claiming to follow one standard while two are plainly in operation.

When liberal American journalists (ie most of them) say they do not consider the evidence against Mr Clinton conclusive, what they mean is that they think he probably is guilty, but they do not mind. By a strange logical hiccup, it is almost expected and forgivable for Democratic presidents to behave this way, a legacy from JFK, whose libidinal makes John Tower's "indiscreet conduct" look like pat-a-cake.

For an American mainstream journalist to voice the suspicion that the media have a left-leaning bias is an unforgivable blasphemy. One who did so recently was Emily Rooney, the first ever female executive producer of ABC World News, the most powerful news outlet in America. She found as a result, to her mortification, that she was lauded by such right-wing pundits as talk-show host Rush Limbaugh. On Wednesday she was fired.

Will they nationalise families?

Pontificating about marriage and childbearing makes Tories look foolish

The parliamentary Conservative party emerges from the Yeo affair numb with shock. It covers before the tabloid press. Who next will be shopped to the enemy? Who next will find the black spot under the plate? In the old days, when the club was a club, a gentleman knew what to do. The rules were clear. The party is like a jaded mafia family. One member after another jumps up from the table screaming "Oh my God, not Please boss, not me. I meant no harm!" He has to be bundled out of the room and wasted behind the garage. The bemused godfather dribbles down his tuxedo and moans, "Sad... purely private matter... none of my doing."

John Major was right when he said at the start that Mr Yeo's private life had no bearing on his ministerial duties. But then he should not have led the charge lecturing the public on their private lives at last October's party conference. "Family values" may have seemed a bland enough slogan at the time. A stopgap was needed while the Downing Street crew hunted for the Shark of Majorism. But was there ever a juicier hostage to media fortune than a personal morality campaign?

Even by Tory standards, last October was reckless. The message was clear. The party regards single-parent families as morally defective. One parent is less able than two to "know the difference between right and wrong," as ministers parroted to each other. The two-parent family is not just the norm but a social policy imperative. "What action can be taken," asked Michael Portillo ominously, "to reduce pregnancy among those not wishing or not ready to start family life?"

I suppose the logical answer to Mr Portillo is compulsory state abortion. Teenage mothers tend to have broken relationships, and their children suffer various disadvantages. Perhaps society would be better off without them. Let them join menopausal mothers in the purgatory of 1990s Toryism. To save money on child support, the Government has nationalised divorce (through the Child Support Agency). Is it about to mimic Stalin and nationalise marriage too?

I presume not, for the campaign is cosmetic and cynical. What is most dire is the assumption behind it that there is an upsurge of morally neutered citizens, flouting convention by having babies to sponge off the state. Where are they? Certainly accidents happen, though contraception and cheap abortion mean that few babies nowadays can truly be unintended by the mother. Hurling abuse at absent fathers, by whom the babies may well have been unwanted, is not going to bring them into shotgun marriages. Hurling abuse at the mothers is pointless and callous.

Few mothers do not think before bearing a child. Few single parents — whether unmarried, divorced or widowed — are careless of their children's fate. My observation is that they worry more deeply about the obligations of parenthood than many conventional families do. The decision of a woman to bring up a child on her own, rather than abort it or enter a doomed marriage, is a supreme exercise of choice. If anything it shows a respect for marriage, not contempt for it. Certainly it requires a courageous commitment to motherhood. Single parents give every bit as much love and attention to children as busy couples with large families, possibly more. Of course there are exceptions, but to claim that a single parent is inherently a worse parent is both incorrect and offensive to millions of responsible men and women.



Puritanical strictures didn't work then either: a Methodist preacher forced to do public penance for adultery, in Norwich in 1759

Simon Jenkins

I believe politicians merely look foolish when they tell private citizens how to order this aspect of their lives. Social historians such as Peter Laslett and Ferdinand Mount have charted the continuity of marital relations since the dawn of time, amid constant attempts by both church and state to regulate it. Divorce may be made easier or harder. Bastardy may be condoned or stigmatised. Raising children in a nuclear family seems to be a fairly constant feature of human intercourse, but so too does the regular breakdown of such families. The sanction of the law or of religious damnation makes little impact on this intimate and difficult relationship. Most people's practice of marriage, Mount rightly points out, is not as defined by church or state. It is simply as "the most

natural and preferable of social arrangements". Its appeal is that it is voluntary, private and adaptable even to destruction.

Nor has marriage ever enjoyed a monopoly on procreation. As Laslett writes, extramarital births were stigmatised with the growth of Puritanism and the Counter-Reformation but not before. The stigma became widespread only in the 19th and 20th centuries and has diminished since the 1960s. This recent tolerance must surely be welcome, as is the decline of the founding movement and the shortage of babies for adoption. Fewer single women bring unwanted babies into the world, but when they do, they wish to cherish them, alongside mothers of "wanted" babies.

Certainly the welfare state has made this independence easier to contemplate. But the welfare state is not a moral policeman. And even under the welfare state, a baby cared for at home is cheaper than one in an orphanage. The generalisation that children of single parents are deprived may or may not apply. But a century of official calumny, of parent and child alike, has not stamped out illegitimacy. To revive the stigma in the hope that it might be an incentive to

"moral parenting" is surely futile. To revive it in the hope of thereby cutting public spending is cruel.

If child support is too expensive, if housing priorities are askew, if health care is out of control, then government should use the appropriate axe. To be sure, any change in spending will reflect changed assumptions, but those assumptions should be based on equity, on fairness to individuals, not on the proclaimed moral superiority of one person over another. We do not throw dangerous drivers or smokers with lung cancer out of hospital onto the street — at least not yet.

The British family will survive this latest attempt to bend it to the service of politics. It will survive with its single and dual parents, its gifted and deprived children, its joys, infidelities and divorces, even its sham attempts at regulation. The institution is a timeless wonder, a bastion of privacy against the enveloping state. Last October a desperate political party thought the family was up for grabs. What a mistake.

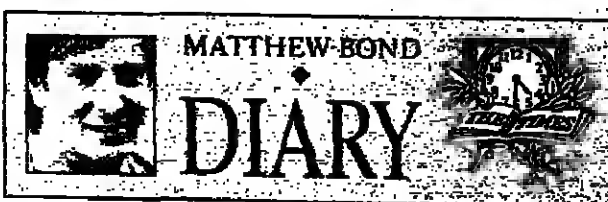
Politicians might now get back to their own basics. They should see if they can draft an education bill that works, or an Ulster agreement that means a thing.

Not blazing but drowning

have proved just as effective.

Nor has there been any shortage of foolish people who, if they heeded the message, doth it not like the gentleman from the National Rivers Authority in Kent who felt the moment appropriate to remind a sodden populace that the county will still be on drought alert this summer. Let him who wishes to cast the first stone... Join the queue.

In nearby West Sussex, the identity of those misguided individuals who built their houses upon the sand was fast becoming apparent. As the rain descended and the floods came, great indeed was the fall of the village of Franklands. As the storms continue, many have been turned to prayer for comfort. "Good Lord deliver us. From fornication and all other deadly..." — oops, sorry, wrong one, that's someone else's theme today.



Ah, here we are: "From lightning and tempest. Good Lord, deliver us. Amen to that."

In short, it's been the sort of week when barely an eyebrow was raised when John Patten admitted to being flogged by Jesuits. Indeed, when it was subsequently revealed that the instrument chosen to inflict corporal punishment upon the future Education Secretary was a piece of whalebone covered in leather, one almost expected Jonah to be brandishing it. But instead, here was Sir Ron Dearing, brandishing his proposals for reforming the national curriculum which had been in place — ooh, all of five years. Sir Ron's revisions coincided with a paper presented to the Brit-

ish Geographers revealing that an exodus of middle-class professionals to France had been led by teachers — ooh, all of five years ago.

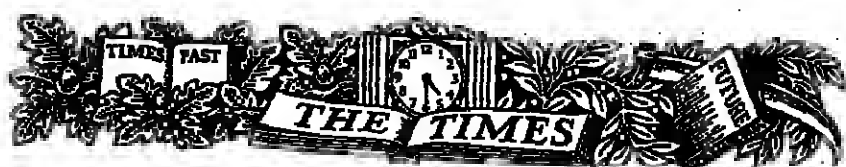
With the inundation continuing the tribes that remain this side of the Channel have been desperately seeking a sign, any sign, of salvation. A brief glimmer of hope flickered in Knightsbridge, where encouragingly curious events were afoot. A man from across the sea arrived, flanked by Scottish pipers, Tibetan monks — and Miss United Kingdom. Could this be a new messiah, murmured the assembled throng? No, it was Richard Gere opening the Harrods sale.

The glimmer of hope emanating from North Wales flickered more strongly, where a young man who had spent a good 40 days on an escorted pilgrimage to far-off lands returned talking in tongues. He

thought the pyramids "nothing special" and Cairo "totally disgusting rubbish". As for camels, they were "no good, painful". But Victoria Falls, according to the visionary from Bryn Melyn, was "excellent" — God's creation, man hadn't touched it. He even toyed with a little prophecy: "If man does touch, it will be destroyed." Never mind Damascus, this was conversion on the all-expenses-paid trip to Harare.

But with the judicial process detaining such aspirant messiahs at its pleasure, alternative routes to salvation have been explored — such as sacrifice. And so it came to pass that two Suffolk hand-maidens, Aldine and Patricia, dragged their reluctant male victim to the place of dispatch. Suddenly, a clap of thunder rang out and a voice from on high passed comment on the struggle below. "Seems to be having trouble getting his leg over in time."

A wheezy, high pitched thunder-clap echoed round the sky for what seemed an age, before another voice spluttered forth between giggles. "Oh Aggers, do stop it!" From this bleak, Johnnies-less winter, good Lord deliver us. Soon?



BACKLASH TO BASICS

Mr Major's future may be less secure than he hopes

Leading off to their constituencies for Christmas, Conservative MPs were in a unity mood. The panic of the autumn was behind them; the Budget was acclaimed; the Prime Minister had regained personal authority and support from his party; political success would surely follow economic recovery. Now, as MPs trickle back to Westminster, they are starting to worry all over again. Is the scenario really as rosy for the new Year as they believed at the end of the last?

John Major may still think that it is, having scraped through the party conference, before which his leadership had been imperilled, the Prime Minister embarked on a strategy for survival. He had a framework for the presentation of government policy: "back to basics". He unchained himself into statesmanlike activities — notably the Irish initiative — which could not only make the Government look competent but reflect well on himself. He knew that this May's Euro and local elections could be disastrous, but he hoped to blame the results on April's tax rises, portraying his Government as one that did not shrink from taking unpopular but necessary decisions. By the summer, his position would be secure enough for him to add the party into the next general election. His wish could yet come true, particularly electoral support for the Tories begins to rise. The polls, the polls: they may be widely ridiculed by politicians in public, but are still in private as the main measure of success of a Prime Minister. Even if the Government does remain temporarily stuck in a mid-term trough, the Conservative Party still needs to rediscover its stomach for fight: it was the overwhelming absence of it that saved Mr Major in October.

But still there is an sense of unease in the party, and it has been caused not by Tim's behaviour, but by what it tells people about their Prime Minister. First, he took a short-term risk by launching "back to basics" at all. It was an almost Faustian pact

with his activists: if he gave them the populist policies they wanted and which no previous Prime Minister had been willing to concede, they would grant him their support. But being too weak to control the "bastards" in his Cabinet, Mr Major allowed them to encroach far further into personal morality than he might have preferred. There was always the risk that one of his ministers would be found out breaching the very principles that his colleagues were preaching.

The next mistake was not to sack Mr Yeo at once. The minister was never going to be able to stay in his post: the party and its voters would see his behaviour as hypocritical at best. Mr Major procrastinated, sending the message that he did not really believe the contents of his own speeches. By allowing Mr Yeo's constituency party effectively to determine the make-up of his Government, he came out of the affair looking again to be uncertain and weak. To disown them the main tenets of his publicly professed philosophy merely compounded the effect.

Many Tory activists now feel let down by the Prime Minister. They may not have a formal vote in any leadership election but, after the rancour the party experienced when Baroness Thatcher was deposed against the wishes of the constituencies, their support is at least material. Many of them will lose seats in May's local elections not because they have governed badly but because Mr Major has. The yearning for unity that they expressed last October may soon be superseded by a yearning for better and more trustworthy leadership.

Among the true electorate, the Tory MPs, the desire is still for a leader with competence, sure-footedness and a sense of direction. What they dread is that the Government, as for much of the past 16 months, will lurch from one disaster to another. If Mr Major does not get a grip between now and May, an electoral debacle then will be blamed not on tax rises but on him. The glowing embers of last autumn will be fanned into flames again.

FERTILE DISCUSSION

A once private sadness has become a public dilemma

When, the case-hardened members of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority have been disturbed by the pace of scientific developments in their field, according to their chairman, Professor Sir John Campbell, the idea of using human eggs from aborted female foetuses caused a "unease, distaste and surprise". Their call for a public debate on the ethical and implications of such procedures must go unanswered.

The curing of infertility has now gone far beyond the bounds of simply enabling a couple to produce their own biological child in the conventional way. Artificial insemination has long meant that life need not begin with an act of sexual congress between a potential parent couple. After the development of artificial insemination by donor, a woman could even be impregnated by the sperm of an anonymous man rather than that of her husband (who would become the child's legal father). If these methods seemed sometimes distasteful, they still fell within the bounds of what most people considered acceptable — perhaps because after fertilisation, the conception and pregnancy proceeded normally and the physical relationship of the mother to her baby was unaffected.

The possibilities raised by such techniques in test tube fertilisation — which made possible the creation of embryos outside a woman's body — suggested that science was shattering into more controversial territory. With the possibility now of female egg donation — which makes the pregnant woman a surrogate mother — a new set of

ethical questions arises. Human eggs may be taken from the ovarian tissue of any female donor, including one who has died or never lived (in the case of aborted female foetuses). The ability to extract and store a supply of eggs from mature or aborted ovaries is reported to be only a few years away.

The HFEA paper suggests a number of areas of moral and legal controversy as starting points for discussion. The use of genetic material from foetuses could give rise to a market in aborted embryos. This could lead to abortions — or pregnancies for the purpose of abortion — being encouraged. Alternatively, abortions could be delayed until foetuses were of most use. Strict safeguards would be needed to prevent embryos being "farmed" and to ensure that consent was legally protected.

Using ovarian tissue from cadavers has Frankensteinian overtones. But ethically how much more controversial is it than the use of any organ for transplant after the death of a voluntary donor? Would the psychological consequences for a child born of a "dead" mother — or even one who never lived — be better if egg donations were anonymous? Sources of donation would then have to be made untraceable to avoid trauma, and the gaining of legal consent might be too intrusive to be acceptable.

The HFEA is aware that the use of donated eggs and ovarian tissue raises new possibilities of genetic manipulation and experimentation. It has demonstrated a fitting humility in calling for far-reaching public debate on their consequences.

IN PRAISE OF CHANGEABLE

Other countries have climates, but Britain has the weather

As usual the snap of wintry weather has caught the country by surprise. Many schools in the south of England were closed yesterday, having only just reopened after the Christmas holidays; roads were littered with jacked-up lorries, the roadsides plain with stranded motorists; a motorway north from London was brought to a stop by a sudden six inches of snowfall; in Essex a fish-lorry skidded and closed the road thigh-deep with 20 tons of sprats chilled on black ice. Bossy spokesmen for the police and motoring organisations searched their thesauruses for synonyms for "diabolical", and made the flesh of listeners creep with warnings that they should drive only if their journeys were absolutely necessary.

As is usual, however, with the British winter, many were cold but few were frozen. There is a cherished national myth that British weather is peculiarly diabolical. In fact, this is a temperate offshore island between the Atlantic and the huge landmass that stretches to Siberia and the Arctic. The climate is moderate and agreeable, never inflicting the extremes of weather suffered by countries less fortunate in their geography.

In spite of the traditional jokes about the rain in Manchester or the horizontal Scotch mist and North Sea haze, three times as much rain falls on New Zealand and nearly four times as much on Hong Kong as on the United Kingdom, which has a lower annual rainfall than Italy or Australia. The average

temperature throughout the British year is 10° Centigrade, about the same as in Switzerland, Israel or Germany, countries generally believed to enjoy better weather.

What is special about the British climate, because of its position between competing weather systems, is its constant changeability and unpredictability. This may explain the national preoccupation with the reliability and sex appeal of weather girls on television, as householders yesterday shovelled a foot of "partly cloudy with sunny intervals" off their doorsteps. Sir William Eden, the eccentric father of the former prime minister, was once so irritated by this mutability that he threw his barometer, still indicating "Fair", through the window without bothering to open it first, with the cry, "There, you damned fool, see for yourself!"

The uncertainty principle of English weather, which would have confirmed Werner Heisenberg's darkest suspicions about the unpredictability of Nature, is its glory. In less fortunate climates inhabitants know to the day what the weather will be six months ahead. In the United Kingdom the only way of finding out what the weather is doing at any time of day or year is to go outside, and look up quickly before it changes its mind. From the indeterminacy of the weather comes the interest of native painters in cloudy skies, and of native poets in wind and rain, perhaps even the light and shade of the British character itself.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 071-782 5000

Ethical and emotional aspects of assisted conception

From Professor Ian D. Cooke and Dr Sheila M. Cooke

Sir, The Archbishop of York (letter, January 5) in referring to the "few unfortunate people" whose desire for a child leads them to seek donated gametes (sperm or egg) displays little appreciation of the pain of childlessness.

About 3,000 couples seek donor insemination each year in the UK. Those requiring treatment have either gametes with grossly inadequate function or no gametes at all. Yet the National Health Service offers extremely restricted treatment facilities; sophisticated techniques avoiding the use of donor sperm, such as operative recovery of husband's sperm and/or direct single sperm injection into an egg, are not available.

All treatment in the UK is provided under the aegis of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), whose code of practice instructs counsellors to discuss with parents the need of the child to know its origins, and all clinics take great pains, prior to treatment, to ensure understanding and commitment in their recipient couples. The Archbishop's "continuum of love, sexual intercourse, gestation and parental care" is at least as important to these couples as it is to fertile individuals.

A national donor insemination network, recently shown in a BBC documentary, has been established by parents concerned to tell their children their origin by donated sperm. There is movement of opinion in this and other countries towards identification of the donor. His identity is already recorded by the HFEA.

Revelation of this information from future donors will require changes in the attitudes of society and in the law,

and this will take time. Funding agencies for research involving the new reproductive technologies demand ethical clearance from the HFEA and the local Research Ethics Committee before considering a proposal, so rigorous ethical review is already mandatory. Sadly, the Archbishop seems to perceive no good accruing to those seeking or providing treatment with donor gametes.

We would be happy to receive the Archbishop in our clinic where exposure to reality should allow him to temper his theoretical arguments with a more compassionate understanding of the problems.

Yours faithfully,
IAN D. COOKE,
SHEILA M. S. COOKE,
University Department of
Obstetrics and Gynaecology,
Jessop Hospital for Women,
Leavygreave Road, Sheffield 3,
January 6.

From the Director of
the Lincoln Centre

Sir, Dr Habgood's concern over the social consequences of furthering "a mechanistic and consumer-orientated approach" to the "basic human experience" of conceiving and bearing children is welcome.

So too is his concern for the moral integrity of this experience and for what he calls "the normal continuum of love, sexual intercourse, gestation and parental care".

However, that continuum is disrupted not only by the use of donor gametes in assisted conception, but also by the very techniques of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) and gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), which are frequently employed in assisting mar-

ried couples to conceive children using only their own gametes.

These techniques involve the manipulative control of human gametes by doctors and others, and it is the exercise of that kind of manipulative control which is at the root of the view that it is appropriate to produce "designer" babies.

Dr Habgood writes as if the Christian churches were agreed in disapproving assisted conception with donor gametes while approving all forms of assisted conception with a couple's own gametes. This is misleading.

The Catholic position, which goes to the real heart of present difficulties, is that children should be conceived only as a direct consequence of marital intercourse. It is the breach of that norm in the use of the new techniques which establishes the bitter root of a consumer-orientated approach to children.

Yours etc,
LUKE GORMALLY, Director,
The Lincoln Centre for
Health Care Ethics,
60 Grove End Road, NW8,
January 5.

From Miss Clive Dimond

Sir, Aileen Ballantyne ("My baby's brave new world", January 4) gives the theoretical example of a young lawyer freezing her ovarian tissue in order that she may have both a child and a successful career. Rather than mess around with embryology could we not introduce child care to the workplace? Or would that raise too many ethical problems?

Yours faithfully,
C. DIMOND,
16 Highfields, Llandaf, Cardiff,
January 4.

Classical Top Ten

From Mr David Chesterman

Sir, Analysis of all symphonies or movements from them played during 1993 in London's Royal Albert Hall, Festival, Barbican and Queen Elizabeth Halls and St John's Smith Square shows that Beethoven, with 44, retains the lead, Mozart again being runner-up with 36.

Mahler has climbed to third place with 21 plus two movements ("What the wild flowers tell me" from No 3 and Adagio from No 5), while Shostakovich has had an excellent year with 21. Haydn and Tchaikovsky are equal fifth with 20 apiece. Dvorak drops to 18, Schubert rises to 16. Brahms and Sibelius bring up the rear with 12 each, both down on last year. There is no difference in the identities of the Top Ten, only in some positions. For the first time the overall winner is Beethoven's *Pastoral* (12 times).

Yours sincerely,
DAVID CHESTERMAN,
15 Shire Lane,
Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

Boarding preferred

From Mr John Morris

Sir, Lynne Truss (Arts, January 5) describes the 40 Minutes programme, "The Making of Them", as clever and subtle. Clever it may have been. Subtle it was not, so obviously editing its material to present a hostile view of boarding prep schools; and serving as a vehicle for a sad and unrepresentative minority of former pupils, 30 years out of date. A recent survey showed 84 per cent of prep school boarders prefer boarding. Is such clear satisfaction with the vast majority of boarding prep schools too wholesome for TV documentaries?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MORRIS (General Secretary),
Incorporated Association of
Preparatory Schools,
11 Waterloo Place,
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire,
January 5.

Role reversal

From Lieutenant Commander J. H. McGivering, RNR (retd)

Sir, "Norma Major, that most reluctant of first ladies..." Is your *Diarist* (January 4) confusing Downing Street with Buckingham Palace or the Garden of Eden?

Your obedient servant,
J. H. MCGIVERING,
32 Cheltenham Place,
Brighton, East Sussex.

Saving the bears

From Mr Victor Watkins

Sir, I am pleased that Bernard Levin has joined the chorus of disapproval of cruelty to bears ("The necessity of bears", December 28). As the perpetrators of the "kidnap" of Turkey's dancing bears, to which he referred, Liberty, the world campaign for bears run by the World Society for the Protection of Animals, welcomes such celebrated support.

Liberty was fully supported by the Turkish authorities. Although appreciating the problem and the resulting threats to the wild population, the Turks did not know how to rescue the more than 100 dancing bears used to entertain foreign tourists (yes, we're to blame) until Liberty built its Turkish sanctuary.

Mr Levin also mentioned bear-baiting, outlawed in Britain in 1835. Sadly, the practice continues in Paki-

Honest attitudes towards the Jews

From the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews

Sir, The remarkable character of Lord Rees-Mogg's impressive article, "Let us apologise to the Jews" (January 3), is not to be tested only by its language of apology or its spirit of contrition, important though such qualities undoubtedly are. Its ultimate nobility should be measured by its underlying frankness, which seeks to cut through centuries of adverse indoctrination.

The signing in Jerusalem by Israel and the Vatican of an agreement for diplomatic relations (report, December 31) and the accompanying statements are not so much a culmination as significant parts of the process of a beginning. While retaining other distinctive identities and traditions, the Church and Judaism, with their monotheistic faiths, have much to do in this increasingly secularised world to stem the tides of despair, dissolution and racism.

We are the children of one Father. Your distinguished correspondent has performed an invaluable service.

Yours faithfully,
ISRAEL FINSTEIN, President,
Board of Deputies of British Jews,
Woburn House,
Tavistock Square, WC1,
January 6.

From Mr G. B. Kelly

Sir, William Rees-Mogg writes: "The Jewish and Catholic traditions have two things in common: they both really believe in God and... in the moral law." It can scarcely have escaped his notice that the Jewish and Catholic traditions have, also, two things which fundamentally separate them, namely: Jewish belief in a singular God and Catholic belief in a trine God; and the Jewish rejection of Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, as the Messiah — which is the source and origin of Christianity.

Catholicism *per se* has always opposed anti-Semitism. But Catholics cannot be blamed for the facts of history nor can they be unsaid: "Crucify him, crucify him..." we have no other king but Caesar" (John xix, 6, 15).

Not the public forum but the private, singular confessional is the right place for Catholics to repent and firmly promise amendment for sins of charity against their neighbour.

Yours truly,
G. B. KELLY,
36 Great Furlong, Bishopsteignton,
Teignmouth, Devon,
January 3.

From Professor Emeritus Glyn Emery

Sir, In describing atheism as "destructive in the modern world", William Rees-Mogg exhibits the same unformed prejudice towards atheists as his predecessors towards Jews.

Yours faithfully,
GLYN EMERY,
134 Northchurch Road, NI,
January 4.

From Mr Robert McLean

Sir, It was a little surprising and somewhat strange that *The Times*, which over many years has featured interesting and informative articles about pipers and piping, should have among its talented contributors someone who in your third leader of December 30 writes: "Giving one's true love six paces a-laying, or 11 pipers playing (whether Scots, Irish or Gallies) would be an act of some considerable cruelty."

Today's leader ("With the arrival of the pipers... the obsessive bounty of the true love takes on a threatening note") merely adds insult to the injury you have inflicted on the world's piping community.

Is it only those three races you specify whose music spreads cruelty around? What about the Greek tsam-boura, the Egyptian zamarah or the Italian zampogna, the pipers of Arabia, the Indian continent, the Far East, the USA and what was once the British Empire? What about your own

English pipers of Northumbria? It all sounds like a very cruel world!

Some readers will remember Major George Millar of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, one of the most distinguished bandmasters that regiment has ever had, who held the opinion that the bagpipe, along with the fife and drum, is superior to all other instruments for soldiers on the march.

Millar stressed the point in a letter to *The Times* of April 5, 1915, reminding his readers that "these combinations can touch spots which are beyond the reach of a band; and more over there is no suggestion of effort in their performance, however long a march may be. It is all so very enjoyable." Not even a hint of cruelty there!

But as the Scots and Irish pipers play their lament in Whitehall next Remembrance Day let us remember the cruelty of war itself, and the brave pipers, many of whom were among those who fell in battle.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT MCLEAN,
44 Cross Road, Tadworth, Surrey,
January 5.

bladders for medicine, we make them fight, dance and ride bicycles for our own fun and destroy their habitats.

We need all the Bernard Levins we can get!

Best wishes,
VICTOR WATKINS
(Director), Liberty,
World Society for the
Protection of Animals,
2 Langley Lane, SW8.

From Dr Eric Chamberlain

Sir, Some 15 years ago I was assisting in a survey of the safety of coal-mining in Spitzbergen. I asked for a record of incidents over the previous 12 months. In a commendably short list the last entry was: "Two fatalities due to injuries inflicted by polar bears."

Yours faithfully,
ERIC CHAMBERLAIN,
13 The Avenue,
Northwood, Middlesex.

Chewable treats for church mice

From Dr John Clayton

Sir, Mr Bevis Brock's fears of an epidemic of mindless violence in the rodent population after damage to a church organ (letter, January 1) are groundless.

I understand that the teeth of rodents continue to grow in the same way as do our fingernails and that the rodents' gnawing of substances of suitable hardness is analogous to humans cutting their nails, serving the same purpose of preventing them from becoming too long.

There is a precedent for mice in the organ, for on the night of December 23, 1818, it was discovered that mice had gnawed through the bellows of the organ in the church of Oberndorf near Salzburg. So that there would be music on Christmas Day the priest, Joseph Mohr, composed a carol which the organist, Franz Gruber, set to music for two voices and a simple children's chorus. This was "Silent Night".

Perhaps Mr Brock could be persuaded to bend his talents to composing a carol using a scale deprived of his seven gnawed black notes.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CLAYTON,
Knapp House, 26 White Street,
Market Lavington,
Devizes, Wiltshire,
January 2.

From Mr Robert Shafloe

Sir, As an organ builder practising in a rural area, I know that mouse damage to church organs is quite common. Mice grown plump on the largesse of harvest festival offerings soon become desperate once it has all been cleared away.

One local organ had all the maple stoppers carefully nibbled off the tops of a whole rank of pipes, quite a feat of acrobatics. Unaware of the high lead content, the mice cheerfully gnaw holes in metal pipes. Ebony sharps, as mentioned by Mr Brock, are another treat. One of their favourite tricks is to gnaw holes in the sheepskin of the bellows, invariably where it is impossible to glue a patch.

No doubt science will have some boring explanation for their behaviour. I suspect they have a malicious sense of humour.

Yours,
ROBERT SHAFLOE,
The Chapel, Park Road,
Stevington, Bedford,
January 1.

From Mr Graham Matthews

Sir, The motivation for the "strangely selective diet" of ebony organ keys is more sinister than may be apparent at the keyboard. The mice are practising: they are sharpening their teeth before attacking all the luscious leather parts of the organ hidden from view.

The renowned poverty of church mice is not lack of money but lack of nourishment. Watch out for anything tasty. The candles will be next.

Yours sincerely,

GRAHAM MATTHEWS,
14 Crofton Rise, Dronfield,
Nr Sheffield, South Yorkshire,
January 1.

From Mr Richard Godfrey

Sir, Mr Bevis Brock's letter reminds me of two instances when I found mice not only eating and sharpening their teeth on working organ pipes, but actually nesting amongst them.

On both occasions, one in West Africa and once in Wiltshire, the nesting material consisted entirely of pages torn from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (standard version). Bibles (authorised version) were equally available beside both the organs in question, but were left untouched. Not such mindless vandalism!

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD GODFREY,
The Wardenry, Farley,
Salisbury, Wiltshire.

From Commander H. M. A. Hayes, RNR (retd)

Sir, For years my wife pounded away on the harmonium in a variety of Royal Navy chapels. She remembers with particular poignancy one instrument dating from the early years of the century, which boasted on engraved metal plates that it was equipped with "mouse-proof pedals".

It certainly showed no signs of rodent attack, though it was sadly deficient as a musical instrument.

Yours faithfully,

MURRAY HAYES,
Post Cottage, Front Street,
Tealby, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire.

From Mr George C. Aitken

Sir, Churchwarden Brock's letter is proof positive of the proverbial "back-to-basics" standard of poverty. If reduced to this, church mice are indeed poor.

Mine here, also rural, have more sporting and agricultural tastes — the cork handle of a salmon rod and the plastic rotor guard of a grass trimmer.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE C. AITKEN,
Whitrig, Coldstream, Berwickshire.

From Councillor R. C. Usher

Sir, Could not the mice in question have been looking for a suitable flat?

Yours faithfully,
R. C. USHER,
34 Fulbert Drive,
Beardsted, Maidstone, Kent.

150100

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM CHAPPELL

William Chappell, dancer, designer and theatre director, died in Rye, East Sussex, on January 1 aged 85. He was born in Wolverhampton on September 27, 1908.

HE death of Billy Chappell snaps one of the last links with the distant history of English ballet, a nursery of talent centred around the Notting Hill studio where Marie Rambert taught a band of young hopefuls the skills she had learnt from her years with Diaghilev. Chappell became one of her first students in 1926, and even danced or Diaghilev when he visited her studio during his last London season. Already Chappell was designing costumes for the occasional public performances of the Marie Rambert Dancers, as they had come to be called, and it was to be as a designer that he would make his special contribution to English ballet.

As a child he moved from Wolverhampton to London, where his mother eventually rented a flat in Redcliffe Gardens. This lay within easy reach of Notting Hill and the Chelsea School of Art where he studied design. Here he also met the painter Edward Burra, who became a lifelong friend and introduced him, at an early age, to the 'gay delights' of Montmartre.

In 1928 Chappell returned to Paris to join Frederick Ashton as one of the male dancers in the company assembled by Ida Rubinstein to display her modest talent as a performer. The continental tour that followed was marred, with public performances so widely separated that the dancers referred to themselves as "La Compagnie des répétitions". Despite accompanying absurdities the experience was of priceless value to a young dancer: Bronislava Nijinska (Nijinsky's sister) was one of the choreographers and the tour took Chappell to all the major opera houses in Europe.

Like so many male dancers of his generation Chappell began training too late to become a great dancer, though good looks and a strong build meant that he was always a fine presence on the stage. (Many years later, in 1951, he would appear in the minor role of Second Savage in the play *The Little Hut*, a desert island fantasy in which he was required to do no more than emerge from the glossy, Oliver Messel foliage and thrill Joan Tetzel with his steely physique.) His most important and favourite role was the Faun in *L'Après-Midi* but he treated many roles in the early Ashton



William Chappell partnered by Margot Fonteyn, right, with Walter Cox and Beatrice Appleyard in the Vic-Wells 1935 revival of *Rio Grande*

ballets (*Capriol Suite*, *Façaide*) as well as in *Job* and *Chaconne*. He partnered Fonteyn in her first major role, *Croque Boy* to her *Croque Girl* in the Vic-Wells revival of Ashton's *Rio Grande*. This was a ballet that *The Times* critic deemed offensively immoral, objecting both to the tight slit skirts Burra designed for the girls and to the leanness of the choreography.

What Chappell himself achieved on the tiny Rambert budgets was astonishing. For the Elizabethan costumes of *Capriol Suite* (1930) he bought beige linen at sixpence a yard from Barkers and decorated it with black tape. The total cost was £5. He designed for several other short Ashton ballets and then came *Les Rendez-vous* (1933 and frequently revived) in which the famous grey dress he made for Markova has come to be considered one of the loveliest ever designed.

In his attractive book *Studies in Ballet*, illustrated with his own line drawings, and marred only by his reluctance to mention his own work,

Chappell set out the essential qualities required of a designer. Near the top of his list comes the ability to suggest period without heaviness — "to produce a royal robe that appears to be of rich brocade... when, in reality, it is infinitely light". His own experience as a dancer ensured that his costumes were always supremely wearable even when they became, as in his later work, over-prefixed and too high on sugar.

After war service in the Royal Artillery Chappell turned to direction, achieving his first success with *The Lyric Revue* (1951), which ran for a year at the theatre, and its successor *The Globe Revue*. Intimate revue's allusive wit appealed to him and he worked on several others in the next dozen years, including *An Evening with Beatrice Lillie*, until with Dora Bryan's *Six of One* (1963) this particular genre expired before the onrush of television. Ten years later *Cocky*, a tribute to C. B. Cochran, was not a success.

In 1954 he directed his first play, a prewar piece rose by Anouilh, *Time*

Remembered, with Paul Scofield, as the melancholy prince, Margaret Rutherford his fond aunt and Mary Ure. This was a look at the brevity of love and memory represented an extreme of Chappell's preferred modes, the other being the sleazy street-world of *Espresso Bongo* (1958), again with Scofield.

He directed over 30 shows before ill-health and, it must be said, gradual loss of touch brought this period of his career to an end. There remained writing. Already he had produced one of the earliest memoirs of Fonteyn, valuable for its insider's awareness of her genius and written at a time (1948) when she was still being subjected to mean comparisons with foreign dancers. After Burra's death in 1976 he edited a volume of reminiscences and a jaunty selection of his friend's letters. In recent years emphysema restricted his activities and he found the journey between his Battersea home and his cottage in Rye increasingly irksome. He was unmarried.

HIS HON NORMAN SELLERS

His Honour Norman Sellers, V.R.D., a Circuit Judge, 1974-90, died following a stroke on December 28 aged 74. He was born on August 29, 1919.



ENGLISH judges tend to focus their interests around the Inns of Court, West End clubs such as the Garrick and golf courses in the more salubrious suburbs. They frequently share a Home Counties background and ethos, whose group loyalties and social ties bind them together.

"Norrie" Sellers was entirely different. He had London, loved Liverpool and resented the 1970s Lancashire-Merseyside split. He came from a strong Northwestern lineage and for his last seven years was a deputy lieutenant of Lancashire.

His grandfather had run a firm of Liverpool coopers — potatoes from Jersey were a staple cargo. His father, Sir Frederic Sellers, a Lord Justice of Appeal, had been a top commercial Q.C. rated the best in his field by Lord Denning, a close friend. From the family's house on Liverpool's sea-line the young Sellers would watch Cunarders busily voyaging in and out of what was then a major, wealthy port.

Like his father, Sellers was a Liberal parliamentary candidate and a Congregationalist. His grandmother had been a Dissenting soap-box orator in Liverpool's streets. His career was to criss-cross the county as a Liverpool barrister, a Crosby candidate, a yachtsman out of Southport and a judge in Preston.

Norman William Malin Sellers was educated at Merchant Taylor's in Crosby and Silcoates School, Wakefield, going on to read law at Hertford College, Oxford. The war cut into his university career and he was allowed to

take his degree in less than the normal three years, with a credit given for naval service. He was gunnery officer on the battleship HMS Nelson in the Atlantic, being mentioned in dispatches, commanded the frigate, HMS *Periwinkle* and saw action in Malta convoys.

For 20 years after the war, he was active in the RNVR — oo a one-night-a-week basis, captaining HMS *Mersey*, a minesweeper doubling as a training ship at Liverpool — and rose to be a lieutenant-commander. In 1953 he was one of those who marched in the RNVR's contingent at the Coronation.

In 1947 he had been called to the Bar by Gray's Inn. On the Northern Circuit, he began in the Liverpool chambers of Selwyn Lloyd, once his father's pupil. He developed a far-ranging Common Law practice handling crime, often prosecuting for the DPP in murders and attempted murders but also doing civil work, especially personal injury cases frequently for the insurers. He also practised in Liverpool's Court of Passage, a unique mid-way tribunal between the County and High Courts. He never took silk, but became Assistant Recorder of Blackpool in 1962, keep-

ing this part-time post until the reforms of 1971.

In 1964 he came a gallant third for the Liberals in Crosby, a seat the party had not always fought but was eventually briefly to win with an SDP-Alliance candidate (Shirley Williams) at the famous 1981 by-election.

From 1972 until 1974 he was a Crown Court Recorder, a more onerous post than being Assistant Recorder of Blackpool but still only a part-time judicial job. He joined the Bench as a Circuit Judge in 1974 and, as a consequence, had to give up political life. His daughter, though, carried the family flag as a Liberal Democrat candidate in 1992: retirement enabled her father to canvass for her.

As a judge his first posting was to Snaresbrook in London for two years. He lobbied for, and won, a return to the North, taking up a post in Preston, where he bought a house on the outskirts, convenient for hill-walking. The work of his court was largely criminal but another aspect was children's cases, especially contested adoptions, in which he and his wife, a JP and ex-social worker, took a keen interest. An Indian woman once kissed his feet in the corridors of the court after a custody award in her favour. But formality was otherwise the rule in his court. A female counsel was once requested firmly to retie her wig in order to distract attention from an over-magnetic hairstyle.

The sea and the mountains were his passions, without at all inhibiting a natural gregariousness. This was sometimes displayed in the staging of amateur theatricals at home, and he and his wife were also regular attenders at the Liverpool Playhouse.

He leaves his widow Grace, whom he married in 1946, and four daughters.

RAFAELLE, DUCHESS OF LEINSTER

Rafaele, Duchess of Leinster, second wife of the seventh Duke of Leinster, died in London on December 28, reputedly aged 92. She was born in Brooklyn.

RAFAELLE, Duchess of Leinster, was the second wife of Ireland's premier duke. She did not like to reveal her age, but was born in Brooklyn around the turn of the century, an only child. Her father's family, the Kennedys, were Irish immigrants from Derry and her mother's had made a small fortune in business. They divorced and Rafaele was brought up in Stamford, Connecticut.

She visited London for the first time in 1924 and became a convert. Anglophile. Well-dressed and striking as she looked, though in fact worth very little, she was taken up by Beverly Nichols, Cecil Beaton and the rest of London society and soon accepted, on a whim, a marriage proposal from Clare Van Neck.

Her husband, she discovered after the wedding, was desperately ill from tuberculosis. Their five years of marriage were lukewarm at best on her side, and while he stayed in the country, she held court at their flat in Cadogan Gardens. It was around this time, in the early 1930s, that Rafaele discovered the com-

pet pianist Moura Lympany. Rafaele was herself an enthusiastic amateur pianist and the *Evening Standard* wrote a warm article about the concert she gave in her flat. Moura's mother, having read it, introduced her to her 15-year-old daughter. The first time Rafaele heard Moura play — a piece of Debussy — she was completely won over, and took it upon herself to introduce the girl to friends in the music world.

Rafaele returned to New York in the early 1930s and while there met the seventh Duke of Leinster, a man who, as the third son of the fifth duke, had sold his life interest in his Irish estates, for a pittance and a small annual allowance for life. Both his brothers, one of whom briefly became the sixth duke, predeceased him and, having succeeded to the dukedom in 1922, Leinster was left trying to live up to the title on limited means.

Now divorced from his first wife, he had come to New York with the express intention of marrying a rich American woman in order to buy back his inheritance. Having found Rafaele, however, he threw caution to the winds, abandoned his plan and proposed to her on the top of the Empire State Building. They returned to England, Rafaele obtained a divorce from Van Neck, and the two were married.

Creditors and moneylenders dogged their steps from the beginning and, as an undischarged bankrupt, the Duke's signature was useless for surety. So Rafaele was forced personally to take on all the leases for their houses. She signed 17 in three years, the Duke's extravagance only



Rafaele, Duchess of Leinster, chairman of the surgical division of Bundles for Britain

being matched by his inability to put down roots. After leaving her to the mercy of her creditors three times, he finally absconded for good with Jo Wessel, an ex-Gaiety Girl, who became his third wife.

Rafaele, however, refused to be forced into a quick divorce, and stayed on by herself in London, only returning to New York on the outbreak of war. British War Relief in America was then in full swing and when "Bundles for Britain" was started, Rafaele, with her excellent English contacts, was made chairman of the surgical division, in charge of packing off operating tables, canisters, iron lungs, vaccines and oxygen tents. She was also given her own 15-minute radio news programme, twice a week, on the Hearst network.

She returned to Britain on VE-Day and the following year was divorced. For a time, after her good friend the Countess of Southesk died in 1945, it looked possible that she might marry the Earl of

Southesk. But though she had other suitors — including at one point the Duke of Leinster who proposed again — she remained single. Her public appearances became less frequent over the years though she attended the Queen's Coronation in 1953, not as a duchess, but as the overseas chairman of the Returned British Prisoners of War Association. For a long time she lived in Grosvenor Square in the same building as three other duchesses, and spent the winters in New York, until her mother's death in 1969.

Afterwards she was saddled with heavy death duties. With a dwindling income, she spent the rest of her life in London, still seeing old friends such as Dame Barbara Cartland, and having lunch at Claridges occasionally, though this became an increasingly rare treat. In 1973 she published her memoirs, *So Brief A Dream*. The seventh Duke of Leinster died in 1976, and she had no children.

Robert James Birkett, Lakeland rock-climber, died in hospital at Kendal on December 30 aged 79. He was born in Little Langdale on April 22, 1914.

JIM BIRKETT was an outstanding rock-climber of the immediate prewar and post-war years in Lakeland with 45 new routes to his credit, mostly in the hardest grades of the day. Because he had a fine eye for a line almost all his climbs have become often repeated classics.

Birkett was a quarryman all his working life: immensely strong, a teetotal non-smoker who belonged to a new breed of working-class climbers which arose in the Lakes at that time.

His early climbs were done in his working clogs. He climbed on many crags but in particular he is associated with the ferocious East Buttress of Scalfell, the Castle Rock of Triermain and White Ghyll, Langdale.

On Scalfell his first big new route was May Day Climb (1938) where his use of pitons for protection caused raised eyebrows among the traditional climbing establishment. It was the first new climb on this difficult crag for five years.

In the following year his ascent of Overhanging Bastion, on the Castle Rock of Triermain, with C. R. Wilson and L. Muscroft, created a sensation in climbing circles for its bold line up an overhanging face previously not considered feasible. It is now one of the Lake District's most popular climbs.

Birkett later added several more routes to the accessible crag including Harlot's Face (1949), the first extreme grade climb in Lakeland.

In 1945 he climbed Hollin Grove in White Ghyll and, though it was not the first route on this Langdale crag, Birkett's subsequent climbs



Jim Birkett, right, climbing on Kern Knotts, Great Gable, in the Lake District

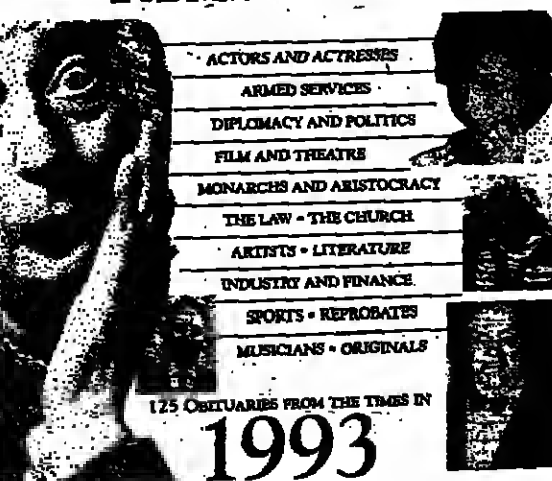
there — White Ghyll Wall (1946), Ship Knot (1947), Haste Not (1948), Perhaps Not (1948) and Do Not (1949) ensured its lasting popularity — not least because of the amusing sequence of names all based on a local feature called Swine Knott.

Although he attracted some controversy in his earlier days, James Birkett was a

quiet man, averse to publicity. His influence on Lakeland rock-climbing cannot be overestimated. Less well-known is his work as an amateur naturalist whose study of the eggs of peregrine falcons helped to prove the harmful effects of DDT on these birds.

Jim Birkett was twice married and is survived by two sons.

THE TIMES LIVES REMEMBERED



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THE FIRST RATIONING

The rationing of essential foodstuffs, which begins today, will bring the practice of war economy into every home. Bacon and ham, butter and sugar will henceforward be available to the retail purchaser in strictly limited supply. Presently butchers' meat will be rationed also. Necessity and strategy combine to require this demand of a nation dependent for so much of its food on suppliers from abroad. Rationing comes late rather than early. In the last War unrestricted submarine warfare began thirty months after the outbreak of hostilities. This war began with the enemy's submarines dispersed over the seas and lying in wait to sink unarmed merchantmen—those of neutrals as well as our own. Imports have been made, more difficult not alone by submarines but also by the demands on our shipping and our exchange for the purchase and transport of indispensable means of waging the war. The people of Britain are not being required

ON THIS DAY

January 8 1940

The first rationing of food in wartime Britain hardly amounted to a tightening of the belt. That came later.

to forgo really necessary food. There is plenty of food in the country and waiting to be brought in, and there is enough of the rationed foods to meet our essential requirements as a liberally dieted people. Rationing may result in a more varied dietary in many homes, and a little ingenuity will adapt alternative foods to tastes which, because of rationing, need not be short of ample supplies. An excellent purpose of the Ministry of Food, to which Mr. Morrison made reference in his broadcast on

Saturday, is to give advice on methods of using alternative foods and foods which at a particular time are in good supply and cheap. As important as the economical use of imported foods is the prevention of waste: and a weakness in the marketing of not a few home-grown commodities has been the periodical glut, due to the absence of arrangements for the orderly movement of unpredictable supplies and the diffusion of information calculated to produce a demand at the right moment. The Ministry of Food proposes to tell the public what they may expect. There is no question at all of the readiness of the people to undergo the inconveniences of the present rationing, which is accompanied by two assurances—that the rationed quantities are reliable and will certainly be in the shops and that distribution will be fair to all alike. To fulfil the second assurance price, as well as distribution, must be kept steadily in mind, because commodities could be put as far out of reach by high prices as by a barrier of sea.

NEWS

Worse to follow £60m flood damage

■ Flooding in south and central England, which has caused an estimated £60 million damage, is expected to worsen this weekend as forecasters predict further rain and sleet.

Thousands of soaked householders have also been warned of higher insurance premiums. The rise will affect any house built close to a river. Norwich Union announced a ratings system that means people living in the same area, but on higher ground, would pay less. Pages 1, 3

Tories tell Yeo to keep his peace

■ Tim Yeo was told by senior Tories to keep quiet and to abandon a resignation statement in the Commons if he is wished to salvage his political career. The message followed Mr Yeo's angry attack on Aldine Horrigan, a mayor in his constituency, for her role in his downfall. Pages 2, 14, 15

Kidnap father jailed

Peter Malkin, who abducted his son and took him to Egypt, was jailed for 18 months for contempt of court. Page 1

Nato accord

John Major has been invited to Washington, where he and President Clinton are expected to cement their agreement not to extend Nato membership to Eastern Europe. Pages 1, 9

Rebuff for Sinn Fein

Sir Patrick Mayhew rejected Sinn Fein's demand that the Government clarify the Anglo-Irish Declaration. Pages 2, 6

Abduction fear

Police fear a father may have taken his two young sons abroad after failing to return them to his former partner. Page 3

Bush fires encircle anxious Sydney

■ Sydney skies turned black as the worst bush fires in 50 years raged to within ten miles of the city centre. Main roads and railways out of the city were closed and 3,000 homes could be at risk unless high winds ease today. Casualties have been low so far, but several people were reported trapped last night in a blazing building south of the city. Pages 1, 12

Crime call

John Major attacked "airy-fairy theories" for dealing with criminals and said people were sick of young offenders "being sent round the world". Page 7

Counting the cost

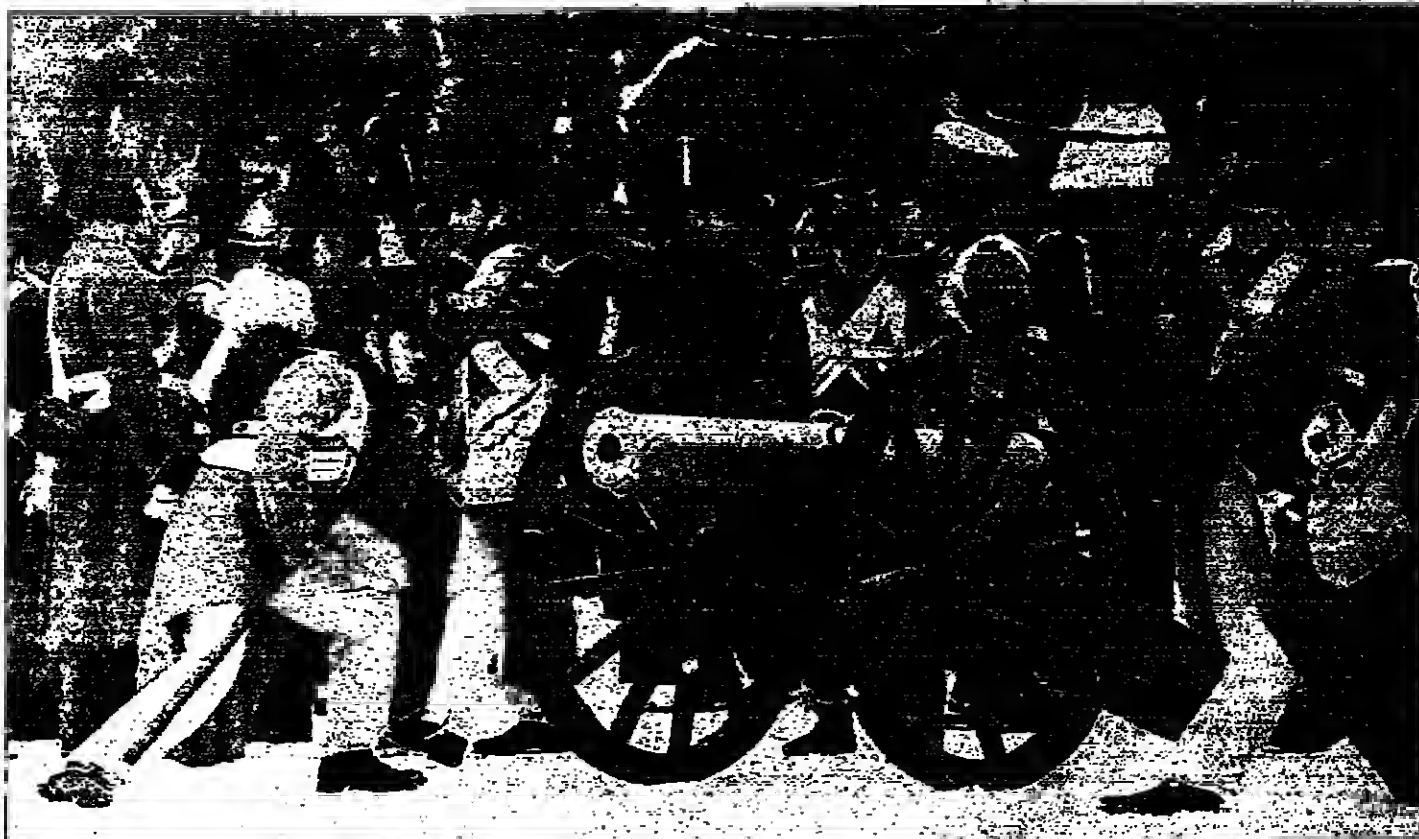
The dealer who bid £7 million for an antique calculator and failed to pay has died, leaving Christie's with a legal dilemma. Page 8

Whitewater plea

Janet Reno, the US Attorney-General, wants an independent prosecutor to investigate President Clinton's involvement in the Whitewater scandal. Page 10

Saudis seek cash

Saudi Arabia has asked for more time to pay for US arms purchases as falling oil prices cause cash-flow problems. Page 11



Muscovites in 18th century army uniforms firing a cannon to celebrate the Russian Orthodox Christmas yesterday. Page 11

BUSINESS

Ladbroke: Cyril Stein, the former chairman of Ladbroke, is leaving the board as a non-executive director with £1 million in consultancy and other fees. Page 19

Paramount: Blockbuster Entertainment, the US video, music and film group, has emerged as a big player in the \$10 billion poker game for Paramount Communications, the Hollywood studio. Page 19

Insurance: Buyers of life assurance policies are to be given more information about commission charges deducted from their premiums, but the move may increase the cost of those premiums. Page 19

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 43.0 points to 3446.0. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 82.2 to 82.3. Pages 19, 22

Crick: Mark Elliott took four wickets for 32 as England A dismissed Northern Transvaal for 138 before collapsing and ending the day on 81 for four. Page 34

Golf: Ted Dexter was beaten in the third round of the President's Putter at Rye, but treated a hardy knot of spectators to some impressive shot-making. Page 35

Football: Everton are likely to have to face a Football Association enquiry over allegations that they persuaded Mike Walker to break his contract as manager of Norwich City. Page 36

Ice skating: Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean marked their return to competitive skating by winning the compulsory dances at the British championship. Page 36

For those in peril: Libby Purves pays tribute to the selfless heroism of the lifeboat service. Page 1

Wine winners: Jane MacQuitty advises on the year's bargain buys. Page 4

Orange appeal: Frances Bissell suggests some tasty dishes using Seville oranges and her own marmalade recipe. Page 5

Long good buy: Portobello Road market in west London sells everything under the sun, or rain, or hail. Page 7

The age of assent: Peter Barnard asks why current novels, plays and television series are so bland. The oddity of this age of assent is that it has all the components of the very opposite: second-rate Government, invisible Opposition, recession, unemployment. Weekend, page 14

Broadway lady: A new staging of *My Fair Lady* has reached New York, with Richard Chamberlain as Professor Higgins. Behind the glitter lies a tussle between the director and the Alan Jay Lerner estate over a plan to "deconstruct" the musical. Weekend, page 14

Crazy buildings: An exhibition at the Courtauld Galleries introduces the paintings of weird buildings that characterise the work of Xul Solar. Weekend page 14

Pretty Polly: Lynde Truss on the South Pacific. Page 3
Get set, Middlemarch: George Eliot's novel comes to the television screen. Page 5
Mean teens? Hope for baffled parents in *Living With The Enemy*. Page 6

Backlash to basics

If Mr. Major does not get a grip between now and May, an electoral debacle will be blamed not on tax rises but on him. Page 15

Fertile debate

The use of donated eggs and ovari-an tissue raises new possibilities of genetic manipulation. Page 15

SIMON JENKINS

The parliamentary Conservative party emerges from the Yeo affair numb with shock. It covers before the press. Who next will be shopped to the enemy? Page 14

JULIAN CRITCHLEY

First Essex man, and now Suffolk woman. Will the Tory party, which has been coloured by the first, now come under the thumb of the second? Page 14

Ethical and emotional aspects of in vitro fertilisation. Page 15

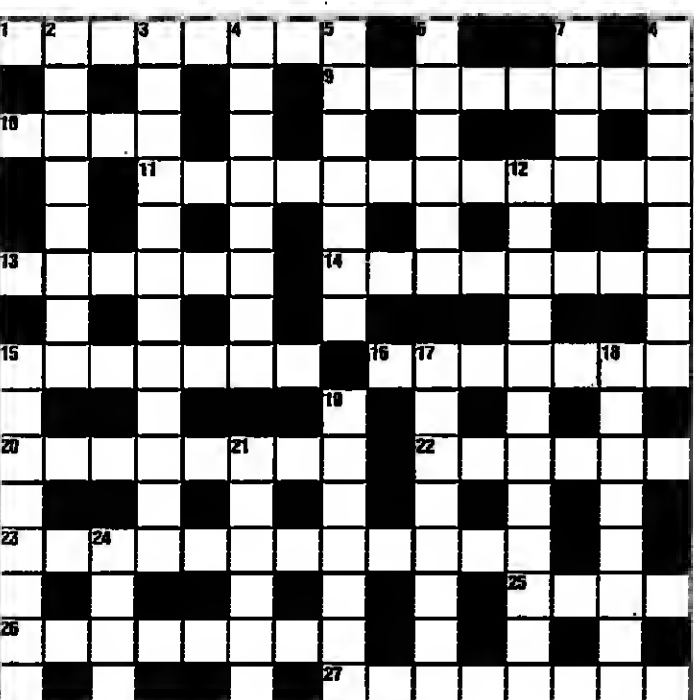
Among Nato's achievements it has kept its members united in war with one another. An expanded Nato may eventually have that effect in an enlarged sphere. With Russia in the fold, a Nato changed from a conventional military alliance to a continental police force may be able to do better. — Los Angeles Times

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,434



A bottle of Knockando, a superb Speyside Single Malt Scotch whisky uniquely bottled only when at its peak of perfection rather than at a pre-determined age, together with a beautifully crafted stationary rack, will be given for the first time, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



ACROSS

- 1 Relieved to find plenty of fuel around hospital (8).
- 9 False teeth are obtainable without effort (2,1,5).
- 10 Unknown ingredient in colour rejected by colourist (4).
- 11 Sailors whistle to get money (5,3,4).
- 13 Less symmetrical pin (6).
- 14 Natural impulse in street and in court (8).
- 15 Ball game uses edible ball (but not the outside) (7).
- 16 Supplements are dead and buried (7).
- 20 Temper kept within bounds (8).
- 22 On edge? Is it any use moving? Yes (6).
- 23 Weatherproof cover for sort of engine with boiler casting (6,6).
- 25 Workman is bananas (4).
- 26 Protection given to an engineer as a preliminary to battle (3,5).
- 27 A door led indirectly into a fabulous place (8).

DOWN

- 2 Blow for a farm-worker (8).
- 3 Escape from thin pipe (6,6).
- 4 I feel my needs adapting for metal work (8).
- 5 Throw writer a flower (7).
- 6 Poignancy of a quiet musketeer (6).
- 7 Ask a lot of one vehicle (4).
- 8 Surgeon brought about conclusion to army's prolonged quarrel (8).
- 12 Were the faith abandoned, it would be a sign of cowardice (5,7).
- 15 Land is a disappointment (4-4).
- 17 Soak is to immerse in liquid — right in a way (8).
- 18 Intended having something done about board (8).
- 19 Papal representative given time finally becomes a beneficiary (7).
- 21 Somebody found in the Grand Canyon, exhausted (6).
- 24 Grass nearly always requires keeping cut right back (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,428

GLASSPAPER KIW
U R N S K M N
SYMPATHIES SPAT
T V C E I N N S
SPINECHILLER
M C S I L E L
ANOPHRES TEMPO
I M O O E O E P
COMPO ORDINANCE
H O T K K T R
SEEDGEMARBLER
I T R E Y G L
LIVOR PIGEONHOLE
C U R K C E A A
KUST METHUSELAN

Solution to Puzzle No 19,433

SCOTCH SPECIFIC
R E A T O I H
REPAIRER DUENNA
V I C D I L N N S
PATHOLOG ATTEST
S I I K E S I
S N U M B E R E D C S
B E R G E N N H O P E
A A E S T I M A T E I
R I T R N M A N
N O I S E S Y I E L D I N G
A O C E L L A
CANOE ALLIANCE
L A O R E N L
ENIARIGES DODGER

TIMES WEATHERCALL

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Greater London	701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex	702
Dorset/Devon & Cornwall	703
Wiltshire/Gloucestershire/Somerset	704
Berkshire/Bucks/Oxon	705
Bedfordshire & Essex	706
Northamptonshire/Central	707
West Mid & Sh. Glam & Gwent	708
Shropshire/Hereford & Worcs	709
Central Midlands	710
East Midlands	711
Lincoln & Humberside	712
Dyfed & Powys	713
Gwynedd & Chwyd	714
NW England	715
NE & S Yorks & Deales	716
NE England	717
Cumbria & Lake District	718
SW Scotland	719
W Central Scotland	720
Edin & Fife/Lothian & Borders	721
E Central Scotland	722
Grampian & E Highlands	723
NW Scotland	724
Caithness, Orkney & Shetland	725
N Ireland	727

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London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
Area within M25	732
Essex/Herts/Beds/Bucks/Berks/Oxon	733
Kent/Surrey/Sussex/Hants	734
M25 London Orbital only	735
National traffic and roadworks	736
National motorways	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
Midlands	740
East Anglia	741
North-west England	742
North-east England	743
Scotland	744
Northern Ireland	745

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Thursday, Highest day temp: Eastbourne 8C (48F); lowest day max: Scarborough, Cumbria 0C (32F); highest rainfall: Poole, Dorset 0.9in; highest sunshine: Newcastle upon Tyne 4 hr.

The winners of last Saturday's competition are: J. L. Hudson, Trevor Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham; K. B. Roche, Hillcrest Road, Walton, Liverpool; F. Davidson, Swanton, Morley, Cleethorpe, Norfolk; S. Tarrant, Redgrave, Diss, Norfolk; A. R. Tulley, Wembury, Plymouth.

□ General: A band of rain will spread east across the country, but is not expected to reach northeast Scotland until after midnight. The rain could turn to sleet and snow, especially from the southern Pennines northwards where there will be drifting in strong winds. Fog could be slow to clear in central and eastern England and Scotland but there should be brighter spells before the cloud thickens. Clearer, drier weather will spread into south-west England and the Channel Islands later this evening.

□ SE and E England, E Anglia and E Midlands: Some fog will be slow to clear. Rain from the West tonight will turn to sleet or snow. Wind SE light, becoming fresh to strong later, bringing gale in places. Max 4C (39F).

□ Wales, Central S and NW England, W Midlands, Lake District, Isle of Man, SW and NW Scotland, Glasgow and Argyll: Fog patches at first, rain from the west this afternoon, turning to sleet or snow for a time. Wind SE light, becoming fresh to strong, perhaps gale in places. Max 3C (37F).

□ SW England and Channel Islands: Rain from the west this morning, becoming clearer and drier from the west this evening. Wind SE strong to gale, becoming SW fresh to strong this evening. Max 6C (43F).

□ Central W and NE England, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, Central Highlands and Moray Firth: Some fog slow to clear. Rain from west this evening, turning to sleet and snow, especially on higher ground. Wind SE light, becoming fresh to strong later. Max 4C (39F).

□ Aberdeen, NE Scotland, Orkney and Shetland: Bright or sunny, perhaps showers. Wind N light, becoming SE. Increasing fresh to strong later. Max 4C (39F).

□ N Ireland: Rain spreading eastwards this morning and persisting. Wind SE moderate, becoming fresh to strong. Max 5C (41F).

□ Outlook: Rain will spread tomorrow, with showers on Monday.

	C	F		C	F		C	F		C	F
Aberdeen	5	41	Dublin	15	59	Luton	21	70	S. Paulo	25	77
Alps	14	57	Durham	8	46	Madrid	5	41	Santiago	11	52
Amsterdam	10	50	Edinburgh	5	41	Melbourne	12	54	Sao Paulo	6	43
Antwerp	17	63	Exeter	2	36	Mexico	18	64	Santiago	16	61
Athens	7	45	Gloucester	2	36	Moscow	1	34	Sao Paulo	6	43
Auckland	6	43	Harrogate	6	43	Mumbai	7	45	Sao Paulo	6	43
Bahia	18	64	Hemel Hempstead	4	39	Manila	19	66	Sao Paulo	6	43
Bangkok	23	73	Hertford	2	36	Medan	19	66	Sao Paulo	6	43
Barcelona	13	55	Huddersfield	2	36	Moscow	1	34	Sao Paulo	6	43
Bombay	17	63	Leeds	2	36	Murcia	10	50	Sao Paulo	6	43
Boston	2	36	Leicester	2	36	N. Delhi	20	68	Sao Paulo	6	43
Buenos Aires	11	52	Lincoln	2	36	N. York	21	70	Sao Paulo	6	43
Burgas	11	52	Liverpool	2	36	Norfolk	22	72	Sao Paulo	6	43
Calcutta	24	75	London	2	36	Nottingham	22	72	Sao Paulo	6	43
Cairo	18	64	Manchester	2	36	Oldham	22	72	Sao Paulo	6	43
Canton	10	50	Merseyside	2	36	Reading	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Cebu	24	75	Midlands	2	36	Sheffield	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Chengdu	10	50	North-east	2	36	Sunderland	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Chongqing	10	50	North-west	2	36	Toronto	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Colon	24	75	Orkney	2	36	Winnipeg	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Dacca	24	75	Shetland	2	36	Xinjiang	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Dahlgren	10	50	South-east	2	36	Yokohama	14	57	Sao Paulo	6	43
Darjeeling	10	50	South-west	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Delhi	24	75	Stratford	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dhaka	24	75	Swansea	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dibrugarh	10	50	Torquay	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Walsley	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Warrington	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	West Midlands	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	West of Scotland	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Wexford	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Wigan	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Wimbledon	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Worcester	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Wrexham	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Wyke	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	Yarm	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43
Dima Hasar	10	50	York	2	36				Sao Paulo	6	43

UK temperatures are daytime maximums, cross abroad at midday local time. X = figures not available.

	Sun. rise	Sun. set	Moon rise	Moon set
New Moon January 11	6:04 am	4:11 pm	1:41 pm	5:37 am
London 4:11 pm to 8:04 am				
Bristol 4:22 pm to 8:13 am				
Edinburgh 4:39 pm to 8:41 am				
Manchester 4:58 pm to 8:28 am				
Penzance 4:58 pm to 8:28 am				

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	8.40	8.29	8.41	8.40
Aberdeen	8.55	8.31	8.25	8.37
Avonmouth	1.55	10.7	2.38	10.9
Belfast	6.23	3.02	6.50	3.28
Cardiff	12.05	4.40	12.38	4.40
Doverport	12.35	4.50	1.00	4.50
Falmouth	6.05	5.88	6.45	5.88
Glasgow	12.05	4.40	12.38	4.40
Harwich	7.59	4.10	8.04	4.40
Holyhead	6.37	3.53	7.28	2.46
Hull	6.57	1.59	7.45	2.46
King's Lynn	12.54	6.58	1.52	6.36
Stamford	12.50	7.51	1.56	7.73
Swansea	10.03	4.84	10.36	4.91

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American jobless rate at lowest for three years

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU
IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S unemployment rate last month dropped to its lowest level in three years, raising the prospect that the US economy will move towards "full" employment by the end of the year. The rate of unemployment nationwide fell from 6.5 per cent in November to 6.4 per cent last month, the lowest rate since January 1991.

The latest figures underline a picture of a strong recovery, which gathered pace in the fourth quarter of last year and is expected to continue throughout 1994. Lloyd Bentsen, the Treasury Secretary, said this week that the economy had grown by between 4 and 5 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1993. For this year, he forecast a growth rate of at least 3 per cent. In

total, the American economy added a further 183,000 jobs last month, according to the labour department. Most of them are service jobs in the business, government and retail sectors. However, the statistical trend of falling unemployment coincides with continued "downsizing" and "outsourcing" in the labour force by large companies. The global statistics thus underestimate the growth in employment in the small and medium-sized company sector.

Manufacturing jobs fell 183,000 last year, while service jobs were up by almost 2 million, including 400,000 in the retail sector. The government payroll was up 180,000. There were strong losses in the defence industry and gains in financial services. Temporary workers accounted for more than half of the new jobs in the service sector. The differing trends in

manufacturing and services have had a strong impact on the regional distribution of unemployment. America's East Coast and several southern states are booming, while the West Coast and the mid-western rustbelt are still in deep recession.

In Michigan, home of Detroit's car industry, the unemployment rate rose last month from 7 to 7.5 per cent. The rate was also up in California, at 8.6 per cent. Suggestions of an economic recovery have a hollow ring for defence workers in San Diego, California, and car workers in Detroit, Michigan, especially among those who were laid off in the last recession and who have little prospect of finding jobs soon.

By contrast, North Carolina's economy is booming, with unemployment at 4.1 per cent. If

the current trend continues throughout the year, as some economists forecast, parts of America will be moving towards what economists regard to be "full" employment, a euphemism for an average national unemployment rate of slightly above 5 per cent.

The fall in unemployment from 7.1 per cent to 6.4 per cent in 1993 occurred without a surge in prices. In relation to the rate of unemployment, Mr Bentsen said: "We are going to go down some more before you see any pressure for increases in inflation." The Administration believes that the non-inflationary rate of unemployment is about 5.5 per cent, while conservative economists, most notably Martin Feldstein, former chief economist to President Reagan, believe that it could be as high as 6.1 per cent.

New head of Takeover Panel aims to stop leaks

■ The incoming Director-General of the Takeover Panel expects more deals in the next few years, so he is keen to stop the leaks of price-sensitive information

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM Staple, a director of N M Rothschild, the merchant bank, is expected to implement a clampdown on the leaking of price-sensitive information to the stock market before a bid or acquisition, when he takes over as Director-General of the Takeover Panel in March.

Mr Staple, whose appointment was announced yesterday, said: "I have certain bugbears that I have had as a practitioner. The leaking of information is something that I want to look at. It is quite a problem for people involved in takeovers."

He plans to see if the Takeover Code can be tightened up in this area. His comments echo those made by the Stock Exchange, which has been trying to clamp down on selective leaking of information.

Mr Staple, a mergers and acquisitions specialist, will succeed Frances Heaton, who will be returning to Lazard. Mrs Heaton had an unusually peaceful time during her tenure. Last year was one of the quietest on record for mergers and acquisitions.

Mr Staple, who will be on a two-year secondment from Rothschild, said that he also plans to continue the work of his predecessors in resisting proposals in a European directive which, if implemented, would impose a statutory system on European countries, including the UK. He said he

believes the Takeover Panel is "the right system for the market that we have".

His appointment was made by Sir David Calcutt, the Panel's chairman, with the approval of Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England.

He said he expects the mergers and acquisitions market to be much more active over the next few years than it has been in the last two, adding: "If I am right then I think that I will be very busy."

Mr Staple, 46, joined Rothschild in 1981 from Cazenove & Co, where he worked in corporate broking. He practised as a barrister between 1971 and 1972.

He was educated at Hulsebury and then at the Law Society's College of Law. In his time at Rothschild, he has been involved in corporate advisory work including stock market flotations, mergers and acquisitions, and secondary financings.

He advised Hanson on its takeovers of London Brick, Imperial Group and Consolidated Goldfields and on a £500 million rights issue. He worked with Sun Alliance on its acquisition of Phoenix Assurance and with Bowthorpe on a £64 million rights issue.

Mr Staple is the younger brother of George Staple, head of the Serious Fraud Office, who was formerly a senior litigation partner at Clifford Chance, the City solicitors.



Francis Mackay, left, Compass chief executive, and Larry Cates, of Pizza Hut, celebrate the link-up deal.

Pizza Hut in joint deal for new outlets

PIZZA Hut is expanding away from the high street in a deal announced yesterday with Compass Group, the catering company (Martin Flanagan writes). Compass will run Pizza Hut kiosk-style operations in airports, stations, workplaces, and health, educational and sports centres in the UK. The aim is to offer Pizza Hut's products in up to 50 new outlets in the next 18 months. Further talks are continuing on extending the agreement to mainland Europe.

US airline proposals win guarded welcome

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

THE Clinton Administration's proposals to relax strict rules on foreign ownership of American airlines has been welcomed by Britain's transport department as a "step in the right direction" that could break the deadlock in Anglo-American talks on freer skies.

However, British Airways, which wants to increase its almost 25 per cent stake in USAir, the American carrier, was guarded in its response to Thursday's proposal from Federico Peña, the US transport secretary, that non-US firms could own up to 49 per cent of US carriers, against the present ceiling of 25 per cent.

BA said it welcomed the American initiative but wanted to see the fine print of the proposals before giving a definitive response. The White House has no power to raise the limit on foreign ownership of American carriers, which is a matter for Congress.

Washington has made BA's stake in USAir, and the two airlines' increasing co-operation, a bargaining tool in bilateral air transport talks, which have at times threatened to deteriorate into a transatlantic air war. The Americans want more access to London Heathrow, Europe's premier hub airport.

BA has deliberately sought to keep out of the government-to-government battle, arguing that its USAir interests are purely commercial. Since BA said last summer that it would like to raise its stake in USAir to 41 per cent, it has been hit by American measures against its code-sharing arrangements with its US partner. The restrictions

provoked the British government into taking a tough stance, with the transport department even threatening to start reducing the number of US flights to Britain.

BA invested \$300 million in USAir last year, with a view to increasing its investment to \$750 million over four years to acquire a stake of more than 40 per cent.

British transport department officials are due in Washington on January 18 for the next round of the bilateral aviation talks. Despite both sides public commitment to an "open skies" policy, agreement have proven elusive. Last year, negotiators agreed to reach a deal by this April to replace a treaty dating from 1977.

There have been fears that American restrictions on BA's code-sharing arrangement with USAir could have caused a serious breakdown in relations ahead of next week's negotiations. But Washington's decision to extend its temporary approval defused the situation.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, which has a 20 per cent stake in Northwest Airlines, the US carrier, said it too wanted to wait and see what America actually delivers on the question of foreign ownership. Peter Bouw, KLM chairman, has said that his airline is in no hurry to increase its stake.

Air UK profits from Heathrow crowding

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

GROWING frustration among many businesses with London's overcrowded Heathrow airport helped Air UK, the independent scheduled airline, to turn a £12 million loss in 1992 into a £200,000 profit last year.

The airline, which is 15 per cent owned by KLM, the Dutch flag-carrier, carried more than 100,000 passengers on the Newcastle to Amsterdam route last year, an increase of 34 per cent. More than half then caught a KLM long-range service.

Air UK now flies to Amsterdam from nine UK airports and the numbers using the Dutch capital as a transfer airport in preference to London grew by 17 per cent last year, to more than 661,000.

Stansted, Air UK's main base, was used by 850,000 travellers in 1993, an increase of 18 per cent. Business services to Düsseldorf, Amsterdam and Paris all did particularly well and Air UK plans to lease another eight turbo-prop aircraft to meet the demand.

"The trend is quite clear," said Andrew Gray, the airline's managing director. "Each of the last quarter's figures has been better than its predecessor and there is every indication that this trend will continue this year."



Gray: sees clear trend

to give us an even better profit in 12 months' time. There is no doubt that people are beginning to see the advantage of using Stansted for point-to-point services and to change aircraft in Amsterdam. This is especially beneficial for people living in the North East and using regional airports such as Humberside, Leeds or Newcastle."

The airline plans to introduce three new routes from Stansted in March — to Munich, Copenhagen and Belfast — and additional services on the Paris, Amsterdam and Düsseldorf routes.

It will be many years, however, before Air UK can hope to recoup the £30 million it has invested in developing services around Stansted. It is also suffering from the refusal of major international airlines to move into Stansted.

Short Brothers to shed 429 workers in Belfast

SHORT Brothers is to shed 429 jobs at its Belfast aircraft and missile plants. Some 229 jobs will go from the aircraft business, while another 200 people will go at Shorts Missile Systems, which is jointly owned with Thomson CSF of France. Managers said they hoped the cuts could be achieved by voluntary redundancies and natural wastage.

Shorts blamed defence cuts and a worldwide decline in civil aircraft orders. However, the job losses come against a background of remarkable commercial success at the company, which is Northern Ireland's biggest manufacturing employer. Since the former state-owned plantmaker was sold to Bombardier of Canada in 1989 sales have doubled to around £400 million. Total employment at the company has increased because of expansion in Europe and the acquisition of Airwork at Bournemouth, although the number employed in Belfast has declined by 500 to 7,122 as efficiency has improved.

SEC studies dealings

THE US Securities and Exchange Commission is investigating the dealings of an American fund manager who was employed by Invesco, the UK money management group, and dismissed this week for allegedly violating its trading rules. John Kaweske, 53, was involved in managing \$4.6 billion of assets in three funds for Invesco Trust. He was dismissed for allegedly breaching the company's internal codes of conduct on personal share dealings.

Lloyds Chemists ahead

LOYDS Chemists said overall group sales rose 17 per cent in the six months to December 31 to more than £460 million, helped by improved like-for-like sales by all three retail divisions. Barclay Enterprise, the wholesale operation, increased sales by 80 per cent to £94 million. Allen Lloyd chairman said: "These figures are most pleasing and demonstrate that our business is still growing." The shares ended the day 3p up at 355p.

United Carriers to float

MORE than 40 directors and managers of United Carriers will have a stake worth about £16 million when the group goes public, via a placing with institutions, in the next three months. It is estimated that the road transport company will have a stock market value of between £40 million and £50 million. In 1992, the group made operating profit on continuing activities, before exceptional items, of £4.5 million; says last year's figures are likely to be better.

Limit spreads capacity

LONDON Insurance Market Investment Trust (Limit), largest of the new corporate names at Lloyd's of London, has placed £502.5 million of underwriting capacity on 101 syndicates for the 1994 year of account. This is £22 million more than originally agreed in November. A report on Lloyd's capacity (January 6) referred to the collapse of Lutine. This referred to Lutine Capital Company and not Lutine Assurance Services, which is still trading.

Abrahams to leave SNC

ANTHONY Abrahams, managing director of UK market-making at Smith New Court, is to retire at the end of April. He will be succeeded by his deputy, David Marks, 51. Although Mr Abrahams will retire from his executive duties, he will remain a non-executive director. Mr Marks, no relation to Michael Marks, Smith's chief executive, joined in 1960 as a trainee from school. Colin Taylor, together with Adrian Pinkus, will be joint deputy managing directors.

Melvyn Marcus is on holiday

Ford holds off Vauxhall challenge

By ROSS TIEMAN

ANNUAL figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders have confirmed that Ford retained its title as Britain's best-selling car maker last year with 21.5 per cent of the market, despite a growing challenge from Vauxhall, whose market share rose to 17.1 per cent from 16.7 per cent.

Rover remained in third place with 13.4 per cent, but scored well in December, when its 200 model climbed to second in the sales league behind the Ford Mondeo.

Britain was the only significant car market in Europe to record growth in 1993, with total sales up 11.6 per cent at 1.77 million. Sales of lorries over 3.5 tonnes rose 15.8 per cent to 36,358 vehicles. But sales of medium vans fell a further 3.5 per cent.

Bonus Announcement

From January 1st 1994 the following rates of annual bonus will apply to Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Unitised With-Profits Pension and Ordinary Business:

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Unitised With-Profits Ordinary Business	7.0%

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ASSET BUILDER		3.75	2.81
PEP BUILDER		3.50	2.63
3 MONTHS NOTICE SAVINGS		1.00	0.75
VARIABLE RATE DEPOSIT	Bonus: £25,000 and over Standard	2.50 1.50	1.88 1.13
CHEQUEBOOK SAVINGS	Bonus: Balance of £10,000 or more for a full quarter Standard	2.00 1.00	1.50 0.75
STANDARD SAVINGS		1.00	0.75
CURRENT ACCOUNT PLUS/GLOBAL LINK/WICKES CURRENT ACCOUNT PLUS/FORESTER CURRENT ACCOUNT PLUS/BBS CURRENT ACCOUNT EXTRA/CHEQUE MATE/PECKHAM BS CURRENT ACCOUNT PLUS		1.00	0.75
CHEQUEPLAN		1.00	0.75
CHEQUEPLAN II		1.00	0.75
CHEQUING		1.00	0.75
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*Net rate assuming a basic rate of income tax of 25%

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Almost every newspaper baron in Britain could afford to smile. Now, they hope, the leash around their necks will be loosened. David Montgomery of the Mirror Group said: "The battle is over. The regulators have got to face up to the technological advances and change the rules..."

Business Focus - The Sunday Times tomorrow



ACES LINE UP FOR TOP BRIDGE TITLE

The world's top bridge players, including Zia Mahmood, Omar Sharif and Marcelo Branco are gathering in London for The Macmillan Mail Whisky International Bridge Pairs Championship 1994.

Play is at The White House Hotel, Regents Park, from 7.30pm on January 26 to 9.15pm on January 28.

Tickets to view, priced from £7.50 for half a day to £20 for all three days, are available from the English Bridge Union on 0296 394414.

BUNZL: Anthony Habgood and David Williams

Hangover remedy after an acquisition binge

partners in power

Martin Waller profiles the two men brought in after a boardroom clear-out to halt a profits slide at the paper and packaging group

The creation of a business requires a particular breed of manager — aggressive, deal-driven and certain of his or her own skills. There were any number around in the bull market of the last decade and probably a handful survive. Looming larger now in the corporate imagination is a second type — those who are better at putting things back together again.

James White was never one to grace the lifestyle pages, and the company he largely created in an acquisition frenzy was never a household name. But both he and the less than euphoric named Bunzl, which makes unromantic paper and packaging products such as cigarette filters, typified the fast-growth 1980s.

White, who filled both the chairman and chief executive's roles, departed in a savage and wide-ranging round of bloodletting on the Bunzl board in late 1990. Profits were on the slide, and the City was even more concerned about the accounting policies that had allowed them to be stated. What was needed was a steady hand, some swift disposals and a quiet couple of years while trust with the City could be rebuilt.

At around the same time, Anthony Habgood and David Williams were undergoing their own corporate trial by fire, running Tootal, the textiles concern, and starting down the barrel of an unwelcome bid from Sir David Allwright's Coats Vytella. Sir David started off with the heavy artillery, a near-30 per cent stake in his quarry that had been touted around various potential predators for much of the previous decade.

Habgood, whose unusual name betrays a family relationship with the Archbishop of York, had spent a decade and a half as a management consultant, with the obligatory terms in the States, Germany, and Japan, before moving across to run a clutch of businesses at Tootal.

Williams, after a conventional accountancy background, had worked his way up through the ranks of various Tootal subsidiaries, where he had encountered Habgood and been marked down as a man with what the latter, betraying his American business school roots, describes as "upward potential".

Habgood became chief executive at the end of 1990. Williams his finance man shortly after. What is undeniable is that neither had any experience in fighting a determined bid battle from the inside. They made a good list of it, the City

believes. Cost-cutting that was already under way allowed an unexpectedly good profit forecast to force a higher offer. But by the middle of 1991, both were out on the street.

Williams, in a show of apparent self-confidence that belies his unassuming demeanour, says he had no doubt he would find another job. Habgood had reason to be confident: he had received unsolicited approaches shortly after the bid was lost, although he denies even considering an escape route while the struggle was being waged. "If you're concentrating on winning, things like 'what happens if you lose?' are diversions that you don't respond to," he says.

David Kendall, who had taken over as chairman of Bunzl, made the approach in mid-1991 through headhunters. Habgood, formally on board in the autumn, had to start pretty well from scratch, such had been the extent of the board clear-out. He certainly needed a new finance man, not least to sort out the books. Habgood is noticeably reticent at describing the mess that he walked into, and anecdotes from outsiders he dismisses as hearsay. Surprisingly, he has never met White, his predecessor.

The first tasks were the sale of many of the businesses bought during the previous decade, many of which would never make acceptable margins, and a heavy round of cost-cutting. Shareholders took some of the pain: the first dividend after

I'm happy out in the business; you can't run a group like this if you are of a mind to count beans

Habgood's arrival was severely cut. Much of the work during the bid at Tootal had fallen on his shoulders, and insiders believe Habgood was shocked by the experience. At Bunzl, despite the support of non-executives such as Kendall, he was also operating without a safety net. Although he presents himself as the typical forceful, pin-striped executive, he is startlingly nervous, with hands that are never still and nails bitten to the quick. City observers say such nervousness extends even to his presentations there.

"It seems odd that a man who started as a management consultant should have such difficulty selling himself," says one. "We've all met people of high calibre like White who then go pop — perhaps when they hired Habgood they were bending over backwards not to get another one."

"He has achieved a classic business school recovery of a company which bought everything that moved and a few things that didn't. But we don't yet know



Anthony Habgood, left, and David Williams were brought in by the reconstituted Bunzl board to provide a steady hand and rebuild the City's trust

his abilities and skills at buying companies and putting them together. That's one area where as a member of the jury I'm still out.

His nerves aside, put the two men together and Habgood does almost all the talking, although he has the grace to look sheepish when this is pointed out. Williams's contributions to any conversation are few but well-made and pointed. "He appears quite happy to let Habgood do the talking," says the City source. "He is quite well together. But David is not quite as docile as he appears."

Richard Gilmore was on the defence team at Tootal but stayed on there when Coats took over. He says Habgood is "one of the most intelligent people I've worked with, with a good grasp of strategy, someone who can look at a set of numbers and understand their sense immediately." The nerves, he believes, reflect his former boss's intense nature. "He's not socially nervous, perhaps slightly socially gauche."

But Gilmore does believe there is a harder side. "Tony is very abrasive, he doesn't suffer fools gladly. He's very confrontational with people if he thinks they are being stupid."

In this, says Gilmore, Williams is almost the complete opposite. "He could not be described as a very cerebral person. He's very much more gentle, with an easy-going manner, though that doesn't

make him a softy. He's personable, but quite tough inside." Williams's contribution to the team, he adds, are his good technical skills and an ability to manage detail. Habgood's tribute mirrors this. "He is an accomplished accountant with a clear commercial flair and understanding of the business."

...flair is too strong a word — the retraction is a curious one — "a clear understanding of the commercial world".

The City believes that Habgood was determined above all else to have a finance man at his right hand whom he could trust implicitly. They are now clearly the two men at the top of Bunzl — the new chairman, Pat Dyer, now chief executive at BOC, is a non-executive.

Habgood, for his part, says he did not

make the hiring of Williams, who arrived some months after him, a condition of his own appointment, but he concedes a strong influence on the board's decision.

"I wanted the board to feel comfortable," he says. "I knew what David's capabilities were, but David's track record as finance director of a public company was limited and I wanted it to be an active decision by the board."

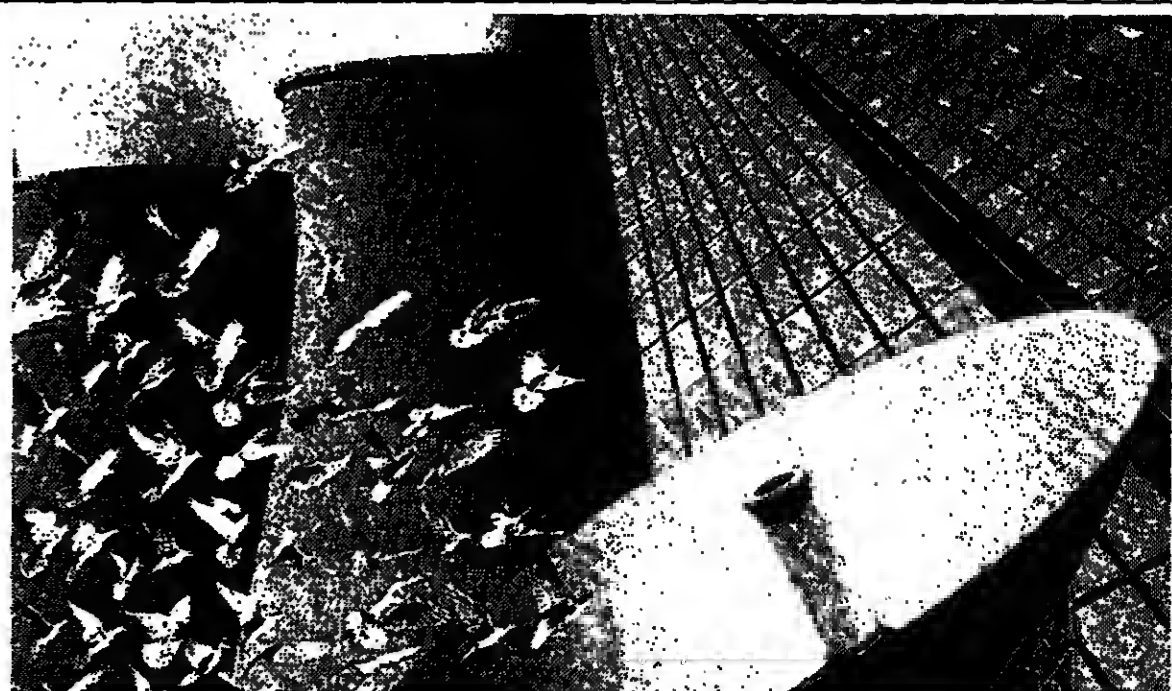
Williams, whose favourite description of himself is "straightforward", refers to the defence of Tootal as "an interesting and challenging time". One can only wonder how he would describe being run down by a bus.

He sees the finance director's role in a business like Bunzl as rather more than

merely keeping an eye on the books. "I'm very happy out in the business, on the factory floor or the distribution side, understanding the different businesses and how they work. You can't run a decentralised group like this if you are of a mind to count beans."

If the two men disagree, he says, it is most likely to be on the pace of things, with him arguing for slower progress. "Maybe in some areas I'm more cautious," he concedes. Habgood chips in: "I think there's something wrong with a relationship between a finance director and a chief executive if the finance director isn't more... prone to cover himself, more into the detail of the things that can go wrong."

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Stein departs from Ladbroke and leaves a dividend lottery

CYRIL Stein's resignation from the board of Ladbroke signals the end of an era and a widespread dock-clearing exercise. Given Ladbroke's financial strains, the second casualty is likely to be the dividend which is out of line with the company's performance.

Ladbroke has been dipping into reserves to fund the dividend, paying an unchanged interim of 4.92p while earnings declined from 4.73p to 3.98p.

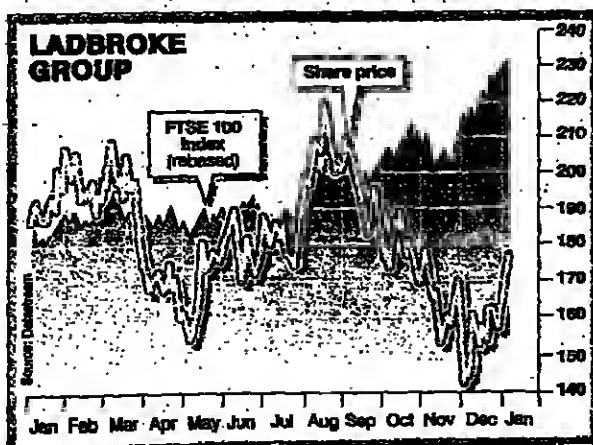
Market expectations are of a halved final of 3p, making 8p for the year with earnings of more than 9p on operating profits of £147 million.

Ladbroke's new management must give some tangible sign that there are buyers for its 6830 million property portfolio. A strong statement on how it is planning to reduce its £1.3 billion net debt mountain would also be reassuring.

The new team will have to demonstrate that it can build up its Hilton hotel group and its betting shop chain, and that it can achieve an improved return from Texas Homecare.

The decision to take part in a National Lottery consortium is not a bad one. In failure, the cost is affordable. If it is the successful bidder a 25 per cent return on capital over five years is achievable.

Ladbroke's shares have already risen from their 144p low at the beginning of December last year. Even after yesterday's 194p price can hardly be described as expensive. Given investors' interest in recovery stocks, one cannot rule out that the price will increase further, but until the man-



agement strategy is clear it remains one for the brave.

Oil shares

ONLY ten days ago oil markets were bathed in gloom, the February Brent Crude contract was trading just above \$13 per barrel and the consensus view in the City was that most exploration and production stocks were priced too high. Suddenly, sentiment has changed: leading E&P stocks have bounced by as much as 7 per cent, February Brent is well over \$14 and the oil sector is deemed to be "in recovery".

What has changed? The futures market became excited over noises from the Gulf Cooperation Council that Opec members were seeking agreement with non-Opec producers to cut outputs. However, Norway refused to cut North Sea production, a major source of the current oversupply. And Russia is unlikely to agree; production in the former Soviet Union is already in decline and the FSU states are keen to build

up their faltering oil industry, not run it down.

Futures markets are about sentiment and hopes of an early Opec meeting helped oil prices to rally. But that scarcely justifies a rerating of the sector. Leading shares such as BP have risen consistently over last year in the face of a 25 per cent decline in crude prices leading some analysts to conclude that oil company shares had become disconnected from the value of the commodity itself.

Most analysts forecast Brent Crude to average \$16 to \$18 for 1994. On that basis, Enterprise Oil is valued at just under 400p per share while its market price is approaching 470p and we are nowhere near \$17 a barrel. Without real signs of Opec readiness to cut production, this rally looks premature.

Motor dealers

A SURGE in new car sales has kept motor dealer shares on the boil throughout last year and news that sales had risen almost 12 per cent in

1993 added 6 per cent to the share price of market leader Lex Service. The market is expecting the outperformance to continue this year as competitive pricing from manufacturers tempts families back into the showrooms.

Consumers can still obtain cheap financing on budget models and the Society of Motor Manufacturers is forecasting a further volume rise from 1.8 million to 1.9 million registrations in 1994.

The good news in heavy truck sales, which increased by 16 per cent, is perhaps more surprising but explained in part as a recovery from a low base. Big trucks peaked in 1979 with sales of 77,000 and the last surge in 1989 hit 69,000.

Volume is only part of the story as dealers earn little on new cars and less on new trucks. Manufacturers have been squeezing their margins and offering bonuses as a carrot to encourage dealers to chase volume. Poor sales on the Continent are encouraging manufacturers to dump their product in Britain, exacerbating the drive for volume.

For the market leaders, Lex Service and T Cowie, consolidation would be the quickest way to improve their slim operating margins back to something like 3 per cent they earned in 1989. But even after its £50 million purchase of Arlington, Lex's market share is less than 4 per cent, leaving most of the rest of the sector a cottage industry. The motor industry cycle probably has another two years to run but it needs more than the forecast 5 per cent gains in volume to justify current ratings.

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the cost
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When getting a mortgage takes for ever

The application of unnecessarily strict borrowing requirements by mortgage lenders may be putting the brakes on recovery, says Liz Dolan.

Schizophrenic mortgage lenders are heaving obstacles into the path of potential borrowers, even as they try and tempt buyers back into the market with ever-lower mortgage rates on which they admit they cannot always hope to make a profit.

Stories abound of lenders imposing seemingly arbitrary conditions on perfectly respectable borrowers, or who accept, apparently without question, surveyors' valuations that undercut purchase prices by up to 20 per cent.

Andrew Pierce, a journalist, was so infuriated by the behaviour of his Alliance & Leicester Building Society branch that he is applying for a mortgage with another lender. Mr Pierce's problems began when he agreed to pay £84,000 for a flat in East London. The asking price was £90,000 and the council tax band is E, for properties worth between £88,000 and £120,000.

The surveyor valued the property at £70,000. Mr Pierce says: "I thought it was a typing error. They just said I obviously didn't understand how the market's changed." No reasons were given for the low valuation.

Mr Pierce requested a second opinion and, after much argument, A&L agreed to send its staff valuer free of charge. "He came back with exactly the same valuation, £70,000. I couldn't believe it."

After intensive questioning by Mr Pierce, the society finally admitted that the surveyor had not even got out of his car. "They just said that he knew the block and had valued another flat there already. Why wouldn't they say when or which one?"

The A&L now admits that the branch never commissioned a second survey. It merely asked a staff valuer to review the initial report. "Having knowledge of the block in question and values in the area, he was of the opinion that the panel valuer's views were correct," it says. "It was not considered appropriate or necessary to seek a further valuation. In the opinion of the society's valuers, Mr Pierce is paying too much and may be well advised to heed the opinion of two professional valuers."

Mr Pierce's £155 survey fee

has now been returned, but he has still switched to a different lender. The results of the survey for this mortgage are due on Monday.

"Lenders' attitudes to surveyors' reports are probably our biggest problem," agrees Mark Solan, of Kinleigh, the estate agency chain. "We had one property where the asking price was £280,000, and an offer of £275,000 was accepted. The surveyor valued it at £220,000. The vendor was incensed and offered to pay for a second survey." Another surveyor on the lender's approved list valued the property at £275,000.

Mr Solan is also concerned that potential buyers can end up paying a fortune because nervous lenders request extra reports on the back of the initial survey. These might be

It all eats into the extra cash."

Happily, buyers are becoming more knowledgeable. Brian McCallum, a first-time buyer, advises calling the lender's bluff. "My attitude is, there are all these people out there touting for business. The banks and building societies are having a hard time and, in my experience, they're prepared to bargain."

For instance, Mr McCallum got National Westminster to pay his surveyor's fees, simply by informing the bank that another lender was prepared to contribute up to £250 for the same service.

He is now awaiting the bank's decision on whether he will be able to change the terms of his fixed-rate mortgage application. "The rate came down by 0.5 per cent after I'd applied, but before I'd signed. I told them I'd go to the Halifax if they didn't put me on the cheaper rate. Half a per cent is a lot of money over five years."

Mr McCallum had no problem with the results of his survey. NatWest Home Loans, which is selling the flat after repossession, accepted an offer of £45,000. The surveyor valued the property at the same amount, but recommended work be carried out, for which NatWest is retaining £4,200 of the mortgage. This is slightly less than quotes received from builders to carry out the work.

Neither did Mr McCallum have any problems convincing NatWest that he could afford to repay the mortgage, in spite of the fact that, as a freelance designer, his income is volatile. He puts this down to the fact that he also banks with NatWest.

Elizabeth Brown, a lawyer, had a different experience. In spite of the fact that both she and Richard Evans, her partner, have been exemplary NatWest account holders for a number of years, they have had to fight hard to get the mortgage they wanted.

She says: "I thought it would be so easy. We're dream mortgage customers — both in our 30s, good credit histories, high earners in permanent employment." However, when the couple decided to buy a house together, they hit problems. Mr Evans sold his flat, but Ms Brown decided to rent



For sale, but will the surveyor's report and valuation put the property on the wrong side of the street?

hers out until house price improvements had cancelled out her £6,000 negative equity problem. NatWest Home Loans promptly insisted on a 20 per cent deposit and demanded that monthly repayments should not exceed one third of disposable income, excluding any rental income from Ms Brown's flat. "Apart from anything else, they make no distinction between low and high earners. I pointed out that one third of a lot is a lot, and two thirds of a lot is still quite a bit. In fact, each of us could finance the entire mortgage by ourselves."

However, NatWest was having no difficulty from other lenders. An exhaustive search by a mortgage broker revealed that only the Halifax was prepared to accept the couple as mortgage customers. "We decided to stay with NatWest because I am a good terms with my bank manager. He's behaved brilliantly all the way through."

Ms Brown's secretary has encountered enormous problems getting a mortgage because she is on a short-term contract. She says: "The problem is going to get worse. Companies are increasingly reluctant to take on permanent clerical staff, especially in the computer industry policies."

All active on the home front

BUYERS and sellers alike have returned to the housing market with renewed enthusiasm in the first week of the new year (Liz Dolan writes).

Estate agencies, already optimistic after the recent flurry of encouraging economic statistics, report that business has been even better than expected. Adrian Adams, marketing director of the Chancellors chain, said: "The signs are very encouraging. We have been getting lots of enquiries. They are well up on this time last year."

A tour of branches in south Oxfordshire reinforced his optimism. "I have just spoken to the manager of our Watlington branch, and he is very excited. They have seen a tremendous surge in interest."

However, Mr Adams said: "Whether it will continue is another question."

Business has also been brisk at Kinleigh, a London agency. Mark Solan, of the company's Southfields branch, said: "Owners are coming back on the market and we have registered a lot more people than we expected to."

The branch was asked to carry out six valuations on Wednesday alone. "That is very good at any time. We are all feeling really good about things. Lots of buyers who have been shopping around for bargains in the past six months are now discovering that they cannot get away with silly offers. We are now able to say 'sorry, it's gone' much more often. It's great."

Weekend Money
is edited by
Rose Wild

'Estate agents can't remember lenders ever being this cautious'

anything from drainage inspections and electrical surveys to reports by tree surgeons and timber and damp specialists. All of this means extra expense, much of which would appear to be avoidable.

Mr Solan cites the example of a tree surgeon called in because the survey had mentioned the proximity of a tree to a manhole. The tree surgeon recommended that a drains' survey should be carried out. "Why didn't they do that in the first place?"

"We tell buyers that reports can make properties sound worse than they are because lenders are trying to cover themselves and surveyors are worried about being sued. But they're still wary because they think we're biased. Estate agents who have been in the business ten or 15 years say they can't remember lenders ever being this cautious."

"An increasing number have lost out twice already and aren't so keen to stump up another £200 to £300 to miss out for a third time. There may also be a question of solicitors' fees, search fees or whatever."

Life customers still sold short

We are getting there. But oh, so slowly. Five years ago, the Office of Fair Trading decided it would be fair for the customers of life assurance companies to know how much they were paying for the latest whizzbang insurance policy.

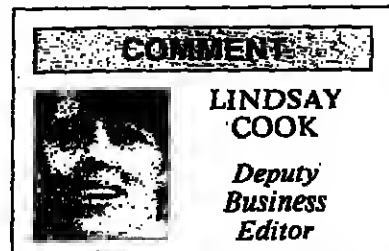
The Securities and Investments Board, the regulator of life assurance, disagreed. Astonishingly, it argued that it was not possible to tell customers how much commission was paid to salespeople, nor was it relevant to the sale.

Since then, the management of SIB has changed. Now, at last, it has published new recommendations which broadly follow the original line of the OFT. Customers should be allowed to know what they are paying.

The Treasury ruled last year that commission should be revealed in cash terms before the customer signed on the dotted line. Kenneth Clarke may not be an economist, but he recognised that if a salesman was paid £1,000 to sell a unit-linked policy and £400 to sell unit trusts managed by the same people, he might be tempted by the larger sum.

All well and good so far, but customers are still being sold short. The regulators recommend that insurance companies tell customers: "If you are advised to buy a plan by an independent adviser or one of our company representatives, we will pay them commission."

You might get the impression that the insurance company foots this bill out of the kindness of its heart. Actually, the customer will pay eventually, because the money will be taken from the premiums he or she pays into the policy



LINDSAY
COOK
Deputy
Business
Editor

in the early years. Typically, someone taking out a £50-a-month endowment policy will find that more than £500 is lost in commission. Other expenses will also eat into the initial investment.

Policyholders who cash in within the first few years are warned by the caring SIB that they are unlikely to get back as much as they put in. The board suggests that insurance companies should use gentle phrases.

They should ask customers to "be careful". They should suggest that customers "will probably get back less" than they paid if the policy is stopped early. To find out how much less, of course, they must keep on reading the small print.

In the vast majority of cases, it takes five years or more to get back the amount paid out in premiums when cancelling a policy. This is because of the setting-up charges, including commission, charged in the early years.

Of course, it is useful for customers who may have to surrender early to know in advance how much they stand to lose. But buyers of 25-year policies who have no intention of surrendering

their policies early might also like to have clearly stated how much of their money is invested at the end of years one, two and three, so they can make comparisons with other investments.

It may seem curmudgeonly to be so critical of the latest set of draft rules. They do, after all, go a long way towards what we have long called for. But now victory for the policyholders of Britain is in sight, we must ensure that policies are not couched in the weasel words so beloved of the insurance industry. It is the customer who pays, and he or she should know exactly how much.

Charging banks

It is not only insurance customers who need information clearly in print, in advance of paying for a service. As the banks thrash out their revised code of practice for personal customers, it is worth those customers making clear that they would like to know how much is going to be plundered from their current accounts for charges incurred when their accounts are overdrawn.

National Westminster, TSB and Bank of Scotland already pre-notify customers of charges. Lloyds plans to do so soon. Barclays, along with other banks, does not think its customers want such a service.

Pre-notification of overdraft charges was, however, one of the strongest demands made before the code was implemented. Most other organisations have to submit a bill before they can expect payment. Banks should be no different.



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An RCN hotline has intensified concerns about hard-sell tactics. Liz Dolan reports



Some nurses seem to have been targeted as vulnerable little females, the RCN says

Nursing grievances on private pensions

An emergency pensions hotline, set up after Christmas by the Royal College of Nursing, has been flooded with calls from nurses who fear that they have been wrongly advised to switch out of the NHS pensions scheme into less generous personal plans.

Martin Burke, group marketing manager of RCN Membership Services, said: "The switchboard was constantly jammed, and we're already trying to get more lines. We've dealt with more than 200 enquiries. That may not sound very many, but that was simply the number who were able to get through."

The nature of the individual calls has yet to be analysed properly, but the RCN's worst fears are already being realised. Mr Burke said: "I've taken a quick look at 50 or 60 cases and, depressingly, only in a couple of cases have we been able to reassure callers that their pension arrangements appear to be OK."

Almost all the remainder involved the apparent mis-

selling of private pension plans by sales staff employed directly, or indirectly, by some of Britain's biggest and best known insurance companies.

Most enquiries appear to relate to private plans taken out in 1989, at the height of the Government's campaign to encourage people to switch into private pensions. "That was the time when TV and the press were plastered with adverts offering bribes to opt out of Serps," Mr Burke said.

Many of the nurses are unable to recall specific reasons for moving from the NHS scheme. Where they could remember, performance and flexibility were the two most common reasons given. "They were told that the private plans were likely to perform better. A lot were young females, who were told 'look, you're going to want kids, or maybe leave the profession altogether. Our plans allow you to do that.' They appear to have been targeted as poor, vulnerable little females."

The hotline opened on December 29, after the Securities and Investments Board launched an enquiry into allegations that hundreds of thousands of people may have been wrongly advised to leave generous company schemes.

The RCN said it had been concerned for some time that nurses were being lured into leaving the NHS scheme by "hard-sell tactics" employed by pensions sales staff. An article in an RCN journal entitled "Your Pension Under Threat" drew 9,000 responses. "And this was before recent publicity from the SIB on poor pensions advice," it says.

Christine Hancock, general secretary of the RCN, said: "The new service should put nurses' minds at rest and provide independent advice in their best interests. The RCN wants the new year to spell the end of attempts to entice nurses away from the NHS superannuation scheme, which remains the best choice for most."

The helpline number is: 0272 264875.

Booming shares rescue bonuses

Jill Insley and Rose Wild guide bemused policyholders through the with-profits payout maze

Life insurers this week began announcing their annual bonuses on with-profits insurance and pensions policies. There were fears that poor investment performances would lead to heavy bonus cuts. The strength of equities in the second half of the year, however, has softened the blow, and some bonuses have been maintained at last year's levels.

Policyholders will shortly receive bonus declaration letters, which show how much money is guaranteed to be paid by their policies. After examining their statements, most will be little the wiser.

The maturity value of a with-profits policy consists of three parts - the sum assured, the annual bonus, and the terminal bonus. The sum assured is the level of insurance cover selected at the inception of the policy by the policyholder. The annual, or reversionary bonus, reflects the insurance company's estimate of how the policyholder's investment is likely to increase over the long term. To complicate matters, insurers may use two different bonus rates to calculate the annual bonus each year. One rate relates to the sum assured, while the second, usually higher, rate relates to existing annual bonuses, referred to as attaching bonuses, added to the policy in previous years.

Once the annual bonus has been declared, it is guaran-

teed. It cannot be taken away or reduced by the insurer. The terminal bonus, which the insurer pays on maturity of a policy, reflects the insurer's investment performance during the term of the policy and above annual bonuses. This bonus is calculated using a rate expressed as a percentage of every £1,000 assured.

If insurers have been too conservative in setting annual bonuses so the final value does not reflect the interest earned on the policyholder's money, they can compensate by paying out large terminal bonuses. This bonus is not shown in the insurer's statements. If the policyholder dies, the insurer will pay out the sum assured plus attaching bonuses and part of the terminal bonus.

Some companies, notably Standard Life and Scottish Amicable, pay terminal bonuses that comprise a very large proportion of the total payout. This approach allows a more flexible investment policy, but it also means returns are less certain and more dependent on the final bonus, and a secure investment environment in the last years of the policy. Others, such as Commercial Union and General Accident, place more emphasis on the guaranteed part of the payout with higher reversionary bonuses. Last year General Accident's terminal bonus had led the payout tables.

Name of Company	1994 maturity values 10-year policy	1994 maturity values 25-year policy
General Accident	8,557 (7,080)	65,604 (59,255)
Friends Provident	-4.0% 6,709 (6,885)	+1.5% 61,636 (61,469)
Scottish Life	-2.6% 6,105 (6,218)	+0.2% 58,694 (58,227)
Norwich Union	-1.8% 6,674 (6,929)	+0.6% 60,820 (61,419)
Clerical Medical	-4.5% 6,537 (6,938)	+0.8% 58,694 (61,419)
Equity & Law	-4.1% 6,734 (7,263)	+1.9% 61,130 (62,887)
	-7.3%	-2.8%

Table shows maturity values of with-profits endowment policies taken out by a man, aged 25, paying £20 per month. Figures in brackets represent 1993 % then in full.



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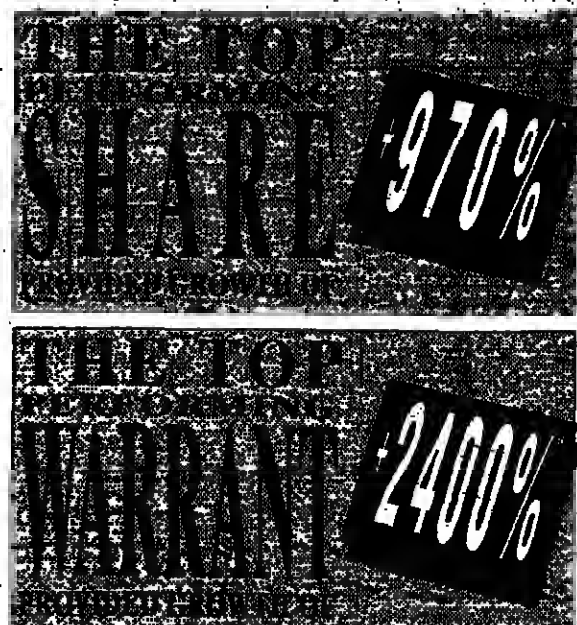
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Giving patients the benefit of a less taxing time

Nicola Cole looks at how private health insurers intend to get to grips with the imposition of a tax of 3 per cent on premiums, as proposed in the Budget

Some subscribers to Britain's largest private medical insurers should escape the Budget-proposed 3 per cent impost on premiums from October.

"We are going to try to absorb the new tax and not pass it on to our members," said a senior spokesman for the British United Provident Association, which covers 1.5 million subscribers and their 1.5 million dependants.

The group fears that the tax may well deter both subscription renewals and potential new members. Not only would this run counter to the Government's advocacy of wider self-provision, but could also "upset the balance" between rising claims and private insurers' increasingly successful cost-containment efforts, Bupa believes.

Bupa will not, however, be swallowing the impact of the planned removal of relief on premium payments by veteran members who are higher-rate taxpayers. From April 6, the relief on private medical insurance for the over-60s will be restricted to 25 per cent.

Bupa was the first to announce its intention to reduce or freeze subscriptions for several of its schemes, while

raising others by between 2 and 6 per cent. For a 40-year-old married man, his wife and two children, monthly payments for Healthchoice will from this month be £37.35 (compared with £43.66 a year ago); Bupa Care scales will be £72.79-£173.16 (£72.05-£173.16).

Private Patients Plan, which covers 1.75 million people, is raising by an overall average of 4 per cent the 1994 subscriptions on its five direct-sale "Health Options" plans. Some customers will pay more, some less, others will see no rise at all.

Increases for "core products" have been kept to a minimum, says Brian Little, general manager of PPF's personal division. A "further adjustment" may be made in July.

An overall uplift of about 7 per cent applies to the price of PPF cover arranged through intermediaries. Benefits under this cover vary in extent from those under policies bought direct from the group, which is keeping costs down and aiming to expand its 29 per cent market share.

PPF's least expensive cover for a four-person family is now £32.80 a month, through its "Value" plan bought direct.

Exeter Friendly Society raised its rates by 10-12 per

cent "across the board" from January 1. The 500,000 plus members of Western Provident Association can anticipate an increase from April; it will "not be very much", predicts David Ashdown, WPA's marketing director.

Norwich Union expects to review the premiums position twice during 1994; the March and September outcomes will depend partly on the claims level plus the effectiveness of "active cost-management".

Although uplifts cannot be ruled out, account will be taken of the "pretty static" state of demand and the deterrent impact on consumer buying intentions of large increases one year, followed by large decreases the next.

"It encourages people to think: 'Do I really want this?' We prefer to see lower percentage increases applied consistently over a period of time," observes Tim Baker, business development manager of NU Healthcare, which is based in Eastleigh.

A one-off increase of less than 10 per cent was applied by NU Healthcare last year. For two parents aged 40-59 and two children under 17, the total monthly base rate premi-



Aiming for high-quality care for health scheme users, delivered on the best terms

um is currently £47.00, via the family budget-oriented Personal Care contract, or £39.80 with the 15 per cent discount for group/association membership. The latter is seen to be as valuable a benefit as a car or subsidised training, particularly by employees in their twenties.

At all levels, including the upper age ranges where heart bypass surgery involves claims of £30,000-£40,000 a time, inflationary trends are

combated with methods beyond simply introducing limited-scope cheaper policies.

These methods include pre-notification of claims, expert account-checking and carefully-negotiated contracts with private, National Health Service and trust (independent NHS) hospitals whose charges collectively comprise about 70 per cent of benefits paid out.

The aim is high-quality care delivered on "the best terms", NU Healthcare explains; this

entails earliest possible discharge with surgeons' agreement and medical guidelines, as well as growing use of day-case surgery.

A 5 per cent increase in the volume of treatments given this way has been "helpful in containing costs" during the past year, Bupa discloses.

A free guide to buying medical insurance is available from Nuffield Hospitals. Telephone: 0202 300 358.

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Customs widens duty-free rates for goods bought abroad

Margaret Dibben says the new limits for souvenirs and gifts are still pitifully low

Skiers returning from Switzerland, Austria or America can now buy far more duty-free souvenirs than people returning from France, Italy or Spain. From January 1, the allowances that all travellers can bring into the United Kingdom without paying duty or tax went up from £36. However, it rises more sharply for those returning from outside the European Community, although the levels are still pitifully small and below the amounts that the Government wanted.

On Christmas Eve, Customs and Excise confirmed that travellers arriving in the UK from outside the EC could

Allowances on goods bought on journeys outside the European Community and for every journey within the EC	
Cigarettes or Cigars	200
or Cigars or Tobacco	100
Still table wine	2 litres
Spirits	1 litre
Fortified or sparkling wine	2 litres
An additional still wine allowance	2 litres
Perfume	50 c/ml
Toilet water	250 c/ml

bring in £136-worth of goods, while those arriving from Community countries would be limited to £71.

However, while the £71 limit for EC travellers is lower, it applies only to duty and tax-free goods as there are now no restrictions on the amount of duty-paid items

that can be imported within the Community.

Restrictions were abolished a year ago on the amount of tobacco, alcohol or gifts that can be bought within the EC, provided the local duty and tax has been paid and the purchases are all for personal consumption. In spite of this, Customs and Excise has set down what it believes are reasonable volumes that one person can consume: 800 cigarettes, 10 litres of spirits, 90 litres of wine and 110 litres of beer.

The latest changes apply only to gifts and souvenirs bought in duty-free shops; there are no increases to the amount of duty-free alcohol and tobacco that can be imported.

The new rules still need to be ratified by the House of Commons; but the new allowances have already taken effect. By the end of the decade, there will no longer be any duty-free allowances within the Community.

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THE INVESTMENT HOUSE

Postal account fails to deliver

Opening C&G account should be easy Robin Young tells of some unexpected difficulties

Press reports orbuling society postal accounts repeatedly reassure investors distrustful of dealing by post that few administrative problems arise. My wife distrusts the post.

The Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society though, was first in the postal account field with its London Share Account. It offers a facility of dealing by telephone, and in addition, the C&G is regularly publicised as having provided itself the most efficient of building societies.

It must, then, have been Murphy's Law that dictated that when I prevailed upon my wife to open a C&G London Share Account, every conceivable thing should have gone wrong. She sent her completed application form with a tax assessment, as proof of identity, and a cheque for £6,000.

C&G By Post wrote back to say that no proof of identity had been sent and that an account could not, therefore, be opened.

We sent a household electricity bill, and asked what had happened to the tax assessment. Before that letter could have arrived, C&G By Post sent us a transaction advice showing a credit to my wife's supposedly unopened account of £1,100.

Understandably confused, my wife telephoned. She was told that queries could not be answered that day because the computers were down. Could she call back? When might the computers be up again? "Er... perhaps tomorrow," Fear-

ful that she had inadvertently drawn a cheque for £11,500 instead of £6,000, and that she would overdraw her bank account, my wife stopped her cheque.

Next day, I telephoned C&G By Post. I was told that the computer now showed two cheques had been paid into her account, one for £6,000 and another for £5,500.

On November 24, C&G By Post wrote to complain that the balance on the account had been reduced to nil because the cheque for £6,000 had been returned unpaid. The letter said that a pre-paid envelope was enclosed, for reply. It was not.

Two days later they wrote again — this time to say announce that they were pleased to confirm the account had now been opened. A transaction advice had been sent under separate cover.

Three days later, C&G By Post wrote again — this time to admit that the transaction advice had been wrong, and to offer "sincere apologies for the inconvenience and confusion caused". The writer added: "I trust you will accept our assurance that this represents an isolated incident."

C&G did not offer to refund loss of interest, the cost of stopping the cheque, the telephone calls, or even the postage to make up for their missing envelope. We never did hear where my wife's tax assessment got to.

I am now trying to persuade my wife to have another go — with the Bradford & Bingley.

It must have been Murphy's law that dictated that every conceivable thing should have gone wrong

Taking account of effect of inflation

From Mr R. W. Blackmore
Sir, Perhaps the seasonal greetings from National Savings (December 18) are more in keeping than he thinks. I am of the opinion that the belief that low interest rates have appreciably reduced available incomes from investments is not justified.

I believe that rates relatively closely track inflation, and should the investor wish to keep the value of invested capital, due account should be taken of inflation's effect. To many small investors, this would not result in a high enough income, and the tendency is to use the total interest "earned". Thus at a time of high inflation, the value of the capital is being appreciably eroded, and the question should be asked as to why the capital should not be eroded by a withdrawal in a period of low interest/low inflation. As a result, there can be a numerical difference, but not a difference in value.

Similarly in high inflation, the value of the income is appreciably reduced and most likely some withdrawal becomes necessary to maintain its value. Such basic calculations, assuming that the withdrawn

income is continually increased to maintain its value, suggest the capital lasts a similar period in a low interest/inflation regime as it does in a high interest/inflation one for the same income.

The basic criteria for determining the available income is how long the capital is required to last and not the prevailing interest rate. Yours faithfully,
R. W. BLACKMORE,
9 Fairlea, Maidenhead.

Taxman sheds no light on impact of married allowance rate cut

From Mr J. E. Rednall
Sir, I read with interest Mr C. G. Cox's letter (January 1) about the limitation of the married couples allowance to the 20 per cent rate since I had on the previous day asked my local Inland Revenue office how this would in practice be applied.

Their reply was less helpful than that of Peat Marwick to Mr Cox's letter. They said that they had not yet received instructions on how the limita-

tion was to be applied and suggested that I should telephone again in two months' time.

It is surely most unsatisfactory that, more than nine months after the then Chan-

cellor announced his intention to make this change with effect from April 1994, the Inland Revenue still cannot tell affected taxpayers how they can work out how much extra tax they will have to pay as a

result. So much for the Taxpayer's Charter. Yours faithfully,
J. E. REDNALL,
The Senge House,
Farm Lane,
Ditchling, East Sussex.

CGT ALLOWANCE, NOVEMBER 1993

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in November 1993.

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
January	—	0.714	0.631	0.553	0.471	0.416
February	—	0.707	0.624	0.546	0.468	0.410
March	0.782	0.704	0.619	0.526	0.484	0.408
April	0.747	0.650	0.597	0.494	0.450	0.391
May	0.735	0.673	0.591	0.487	0.447	0.390
June	0.730	0.669	0.587	0.484	0.448	0.390
July	0.729	0.660	0.589	0.487	0.452	0.391
August	0.729	0.653	0.574	0.483	0.448	0.387
September	0.730	0.645	0.571	0.484	0.449	0.388
October	0.721	0.640	0.562	0.481	0.438	0.376
November	0.713	0.634	0.557	0.478	0.429	0.369
December	0.718	0.630	0.558	0.474	0.421	0.371
1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	
January	0.371	0.276	0.185	0.088	0.044	0.027
February	0.365	0.267	0.178	0.082	0.039	0.020
March	0.360	0.261	0.168	0.078	0.036	0.017
April	0.338	0.239	0.132	0.064	0.020	0.007
May	0.333	0.231	0.122	0.061	0.017	0.004
June	0.328	0.227	0.118	0.058	0.017	0.004
July	0.327	0.226	0.117	0.058	0.020	0.006
August	0.312	0.223	0.108	0.056	0.019	0.002
September	0.308	0.214	0.095	0.052	0.016	—NIL—
October	0.293	0.205	0.087	0.048	0.012	—NIL—
November	0.287	0.195	0.085	0.044	0.014	—NIL—
December	0.284	0.192	0.090	0.043	0.017	—NIL—

The 11 month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1985 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

Nine months and still nobody knows what it is



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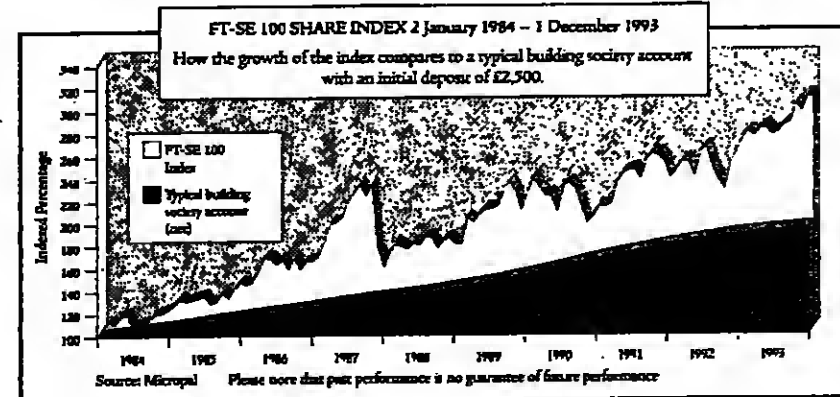
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Bank	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary Dep A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Fixed Term Deposit	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Barclays	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Lloyds	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Midland	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Natwest	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

HIGH INTEREST CHEQUE ACCOUNTS

Bank	Rate	Term	Notes
Bank of Scotland	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Barclays	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Prime A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Co-operative	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Ulster	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Lloyds	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Midland	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Natwest	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

BUILDING SOCIETIES

Society	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary Share A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Best buy - large deposit	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Best buy - all sizes	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Barclays	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Lloyds	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Midland	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Natwest	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Product	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Investment A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Income Bond	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
7th Index Link	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
4th Index Link	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Weekly Plan	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Children's Bond	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Gift Aid Plan	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Child's Plan	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
1st Option Plan	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Bond	Rate	Term	Notes
Consolidated Lf	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Prosperity Life	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Financial A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Financial A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Financial A/c	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

RATES

Rate	Term	Notes
5.25%	1 year	1,000 - 7 day
5.25%	1 year	1,000 - 7 day
5.25%	1 year	1,000 - 7 day
5.25%	1 year	1,000 - 7 day
5.25%	1 year	1,000 - 7 day

TESSA

Product	Rate	Term	Notes
Shaped	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Shaped	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Shaped	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Shaped	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day
Shaped	0.36	0.30	1,000 - 7 day

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[illegible]

P/E	1993/94 High/Low	Company	Price \$	% Chg	Nbr of Shs Out	Yld %
31.9	161	100-KR Energy O&G	51	2	64.15	
31.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
31.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
30.8	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
30.3	61	3M	52		94.114	
30.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.8	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.7	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.6	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.5	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.3	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
29.0	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.9	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.8	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.7	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.6	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.5	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.3	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
28.0	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.9	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.8	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.7	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.6	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.5	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.3	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
27.0	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.9	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.8	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.7	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.6	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.5	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.3	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
26.0	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
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24.6	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.5	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.4	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.3	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.2	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.1	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
24.0	100-KR Energy O&G	51				
23.9						

PAPER, PRINT, ADVTG						
375	120	AYR Holdings	172	2	24.16	
374	120	AYR Holdings	172			
373	140	AYR Holdings	172			
372	140	AYR Holdings	172			
371	405	AYR Holdings	172	5	86	
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190	120	AYR				

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60	43	83	52	Average	130	1	41	34
70	44	92	53	Average	130	1	41	34
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90	46	110	55	Average	130	1	41	34
100	47	119	56	Average	130	1	41	34
110	48	128	57	Average	130	1	41	34
120	49	137	58	Average	130	1	41	34
130	50	146	59	Average	130	1	41	34
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740	111	695	120	Average	130	1	41	34
750	112	704	121	Average	130	1	41	34
760	113	713	122	Average	130	1	41	34
770	114	722	123	Average	130	1	41	34
780	115	731	124	Average	130	1	41	34
790	116	740	125	Average	130	1	41	34
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810	118	758	127	Average	130	1	41	34
820	119	767	128	Average	130	1	41	34
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860	123	803	132	Average	130	1	41	34
870	124	812	133	Average	130	1	41	34
880	125	821	134	Average	130	1	41	34
890	126	830	135	Average	130	1	41	34
900	127	839	136	Average	130	1	41	34
910	128	848	137	Average	130	1	41	34
920	129	857	138	Average	130	1	41	34
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960	133	893	142	Average	130	1	41	34
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104%	+ 7.80	6.80	204%	199%	1998	12.26.2000	205%				
104%	+ 7.80	6.80	204%	199%	1998	12.26.2000	205%				
86%	+ 4.00	5.20	12%	185	1998	12.26.2000	171%				
104%	+ 6.80	6.17	173%	185	1998	12.26.2000	171%				
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104%	+ 7.41	6.38	106%	199%	1998	12.26.2000	187%				
146%	+ 8.28	6.57	187%	146%	1998	12.26.2000	187%				
110%	+ 7.22	6.33	187%	146%	1998	12.26.2000	187%				
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Round the World Race resumes

Smith's team may deprive Dalton of home victory

"PORTS and women rot ships and men." That old-salt saying has a ring of truth about it as we prepare for the restart of the Whitbread Round the World Race tomorrow.

The month spent in Fremantle recovering from the rigours of the Southern Ocean has been great, but any longer spent in the heat and sun of western Australia would begin to wear down our competitiveness.

The crew of the European entry, *Intrium Justitia*, is ready to head out to sea again. We hoist sails tomorrow morning for the third stage with feet thawed out and everybody back up to his fighting weight.

Having led the fleet into Fremantle, the crew is optimistic about our chances on this short 3,272-mile dash round the bottom of Australia and across the Tasman.

The hope on board is that we can not only lead the Whitbread 60 class, but beat the maxis again and rob Grant Dalton's New Zealand *Endeavour* of victory in his home port.

The 16-20 knot south westerly winds predicted for the start should give the Whitbread 60s an edge over the maxis on the leg down to Cape Leeuwin and if we meet headwinds again in the Tasman, then Dalton's New Zealand maxi crew could be left contemplating slashed wrists in sacrifice.

This is not a leg where one boat is likely to break away



Lawrie Smith has high hopes that the crew of *Intrium Justitia* will take line honours in Whitbread fleet

from the fleet. With weather gates expected at Leeuwin and Tasmania, we are prepared for a hard battle, certainly within the Whitbread 60 class.

The long stopover has given us the chance to make several changes to the yacht. First and foremost, we have plugged all the leaks that made life so wet and unbearable below decks.

The boat has been given a full service and we have made a number of performance improvements to the rig, including reshaping the main-sail and replacing four of *Intrium Justitia*'s running and reaching sails.

Another addition welcomed by the crew is more food. Troops fight best on full stomachs and after we all lost several kilos during the last 7,500-mile stage from Uruguay, I have increased everybody's daily calorie intake from 4,300 to 5,000.

Instead of relying almost exclusively on freeze-dried food, the menus now include pasta, cereals and sugar, with chocolate kept at the ready as treats for when we make good daily runs.

Chris Dickson's *Tokio*, which holds an 11½-hour hold

over the fleet, remains our greatest rival, but *Winston*, with Dennis Conner back on board, Ross Field's New Zealand entry, *Yamaha*, or the Spanish yacht, *Galicia 93*, could just as easily take line honours. The only safe prediction is that the finish at Auckland will be close run.

Having endured more than enjoyed the first stage of this race from Southampton, Conner's return as co-skipper on this leg came as a surprise, particularly to his crew. But this shorter leg could suit the American's style a little better.

It also means that he will be on hand in Auckland to fight *Winston*'s corner when the jury come to review the generous allowance given to her crew for the time it lost turning back towards the stricken Italian yacht, *Brookfield*, during the last stage.

For the moment, *Winston* holds second place overall, thanks to that 22½-hour allowance which lifted the American boat three hours ahead of us — a time we now hope to more than recoup on the water.

If the winds remain as predicted, the leading crew can expect to set another record, arriving in Auckland as early as January 21. My bet is that honours will fall once again to a Whitbread 60 yacht. Do I have any takers back home? After *Intrium Justitia*'s record run during the last leg, there are not many round here prepared to put money on the maxis.

□ Lawrie Smith, 37, won an Olympic yachting bronze medal in 1992. He has twice been an America's Cup skipper and this is his third Whitbread race. He is writing exclusively for The Times on the race.

Ross wary of Tasman challenge

By BARRY PICKTHALL

THE battle between the maxis and Whitbread 60s resumes off Western Australia tomorrow when the 14 yachts in the Whitbread Round the World Race set out from Fremantle at 2pm local time (5am GMT) for the 3,272-mile sprint to Auckland.

After 14,000 miles, just 2½ days on, the New Zealand-Japanese 60-footer, from Grant Dalton's maxi New Zealand *Endeavour*, which lost the top ten metres of her mainmast during the stage from Punta del Este, Uruguay.

Many skippers share Lawrie Smith's view that headwinds at the start will give the 60-footers the initial advantage, though Murray Ross, Dalton's former navigator, who has replaced Godfrey



Riley ready to set sail at dawn. Photograph: Stephen Munday/Allsport

POSITIONS

After two stages
WHITBREAD 60 CLASS: 1. *Tokio* (C. Dickson, NZ) 30 days 10h 07m; 2. *Winston* (D. Conner, NZ) 31 days 10h 14m; 3. *Intrium Justitia* (L. Smith, NZ) 31 days 10h 15m; 4. *Yamaha* (R. Field, NZ) 31 days 10h 16m; 5. *Galicia 93* (J. Garcia, Spain) 31 days 10h 17m; 6. *Brookfield* (E. Field, NZ) 31 days 10h 18m; 7. *Wendell* (D. Field, NZ) 31 days 10h 19m; 8. *Herman* (S. Herman, NZ) 31 days 10h 20m; 9. *Dickson* (C. Dickson, NZ) 31 days 10h 21m; 10. *Odessa* (A. Verba, NZ) 31 days 10h 22m; 11. *Ulysses* (A. Verba, NZ) 31 days 10h 23m; 12. *Ulysses* (A. Verba, NZ) 31 days 10h 24m; 13. *Ulysses* (A. Verba, NZ) 31 days 10h 25m; 14. *Ulysses* (A. Verba, NZ) 31 days 10h 26m.

Information provided by BT

Cray on the New Zealand 60, *Yamaha*, is less convinced.

"From my studies, a well sailed maxi should beat a Whitbread 60 by 13 hours," he said yesterday. "More than likely, we will be on the wind to Cape Leeuwin... but the Tasman Sea could give us anything," he said yesterday.

Andrew Cape, the Australian navigator on *Tokio*, was less concerned by the weather. "The start will be very important. Compared to other legs, it is going to be a case of speed rather than tactics," he said.

Mike Quiller, his co-skipper on New Zealand *Endeavour*, is hoping for the lighter winds that will benefit the maxis. "Much will depend on where the high pressure system is," he said. "There could be a lot of wind or none at all. If the high pressure system [presently West of Perth] is parked, then this leg could be tricky. We will have to pass through it, go below it

and pass back through it again. Anything could happen."

Much is now expected of Dawn Riley and her women's crew in the yacht that was renamed Heineken during the Fremantle stopover. The sponsorship funds injected

into the boat by the brewery has been spent on new sails and improved equipment.

The women lie seventh overall, more than 30 hours behind *Guido Maisto*'s hapless Italian entry, *Brookfield*, which has lost No 2 crewman, Mauro Palaschier, in the crew

shake-up that followed the yacht's near sinking in the Southern Ocean.

Lawrie Smith, the *Intrium Justitia* skipper, will make a conference call via satellite telephone at 2pm tomorrow to answer questions from visitors to the London Boat Show.

Radcliffe's success lures TV cameras to Belfast

By DAVID POWELL

ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

A CLEARER indication of Paula Radcliffe's potential to make an impact on the world cross country championships in March will be provided today when, a week after her victory over Zola Fiebert in Durham, she races Catherine McKiernan, the double world silver medal winner, at Malusk, Belfast.

Featuring, as it does, the best women's cross country runner in Ireland's history, and a former British world junior champion now growing in stature in the senior ranks, the women's race will command the main interest.

Radcliffe's win last week has to some extent been responsible for *Grandstand* coming back for more cross country today, with a late insert into their schedule: women's race only.

It says much for McKiernan and Radcliffe that they should headline the meeting when the men's race includes Israel Kirui, the Kenyan who won the 5,000 metres at the world championships in Stuttgart.

However, come the cross country world championships in Budapest on March 26, there is probably more chance of a Kirui victory than one for either McKiernan or Radcliffe, especially if the Chinese contest the women's race.

Kirui blamed the beginnings of a cold last year for finishing "only" third; furthermore, he should really have been in the junior event. "He was young enough to run the junior race but decided that, as he was the junior champion, there was no point," John Biscourt, Kirui's London-based manager, said.

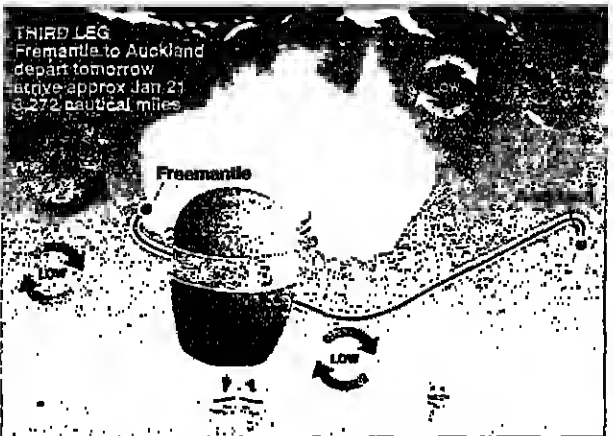
The same applies this year. Not a senior by age until 1995, Kirui, 18, is eligible, again, for the junior event, but as a senior bronze medal winner from 1993, quite apart from that, little spin in Stuttgart when he broke away after six laps to become the sport's youngest senior world champion — barely old enough to drive the Mercedes he won — there is no going back. "I will run the senior race in the world championships," he said yesterday.

Kirui is the brother of Richard Chelimo, who set a 10,000 metres world record last summer before another Kenyan, Yobes Ondieki, broke 27 minutes.

Though not near peak fitness, having returned to training only five weeks ago after his post-Stuttgart rest, Kirui should win, provided his heart is in it. The presence of Joseph Kaino, another Kenyan, should ensure there is no repeat of Durham, where Haile Gebrselassie won the men's race in a canter.

According to Biscourt, the meeting director, Kirui is appearing in Malusk as a favour to him — "for considerably less than he would normally."

Biscourt's budget, he estimates, is one-third of Durham's. If so, he has done well: his entries appear at least as good. He is confident that both races will be of sufficiently high standard to count towards the World Cross Challenge: Durham's women's race failed.



THIRD LEG: Fremantle to Auckland, 3,272 nautical miles. Approx Jan 21. 3,272 nautical miles.

Enthusiasts take to the waves on journey of a lifetime

MATHILDE Damigella yesterday set off around the world: 24,000 miles over 15 months, learning English on the way. She was due to leave on Thursday, but a severe gale, a force nine, the Straits of Gibraltar a fury of foam-crested rollers. So she had to wait until yesterday morning for the start of her big adventure.

Sir Edward Heath fired the cannon here that launched the second Europa Round the World Rally in ideal conditions. Not even that old salt, when in his Admiral's Cup prime, would have wished to be at sea on Thursday, with the palm trees on the Rock bent over like question marks by a howling westerly that pounded the harbour and would have been on the nose until the yachts were sufficiently round the corner of Africa and free to reach south towards the first stop in the Canaries.

Not that Mathilde knows too much about what lies ahead. "No problem," she said with a grin,

having fun grappling with foreign languages as she greeted guests aboard the 52-foot Italian sloop of her father, Giancarlo, a sailing instructor near Venice. Mathilde, it should be said, is aged two years and eight months and, although the second step of the companionway from below deck is up to her chin, she beelines about the boat as lively as any powder-monkey of Nelson's day (they brought the Trafalgar hero's body here preserved in a barrel of rum).

The Damigella family, including mother Nazarena, epitomises the entries in this remarkable rally-cum-race — the realisation of a dream for many ordinary sailors of the kind thronging the Boat Show in London. Devised by Jimmy Cornell — whose World Cruising company has organised eight previous Atlantic rally for cruisers (ARC) — in events involving some 1,500 boats — the circumnavigation rally embraces, during its 20 legs, some of the world's most romantic places —

David Miller watches a group of amateur sailors set to sea from Gibraltar to realise a dream

including the Galapagos Islands, Marquesas, Tahiti, Fiji, Tonga, Bali, Singapore, Djibouti and Crete.

So successful was the first rally in 1991-2 that six other skippers besides Damigella are back again, though the only returning boat is Dina Bonadoni's 57ft Sea Eagle. Despite a concession this time to permit sponsorship, the only one of 26 starters from nine nations to take advantage is Damigella's auto spares-backed *Graf Paris*.

This is an event for amateur enthusiasts, such as John Lawrence, whose Dutch-built Nordia 54 is named *Tigre* — in honour of Caroline, his Brazilian wife — which is a north Brazilian word for Jaguar, with which her father was involved as environmen-

talist. Lawrence, due to retire in two years, will attempt to run his Suffolk publishing business by satellite from mid-Pacific. Or, rather, "if there are crises back home — well, there are crises!" he said with some abandon.

Thirty years ago, he was a Reuter's colleague of the late Vernon Morgan, relying on adequate Spanish to camouflage his slim football knowledge when reporting the World Cup finals from Chile. "I could never have dreamed then of owning a boat," he reflected. Wearying of Fleet Street's hazards, he set up independently in legal publishing, took off, as they say, and now is reaping a rare kind of reward.

Friends of his, interchanging as crew at various ports, are contributing substantially to the running

costs, a common practice among many boats. The entry fee is £6,900 plus £500 per person, covering all port dues and transfers through Panama and Suez. It is estimated that provisioning and installation of rigorously-supervised safety equipment costs a further £100 per person per week — that is, £5,000 per boat for the complete circumnavigation among an average crew of five.

There are three divisions: one strictly racing with no motoring permitted; two, cruising with limited motoring, on a rating-efficiency basis, to combat areas of light wind; three, open. Cornell and a colleague have designed a simple propeller-shaft counter that can monitor engine-time and conveniently avoid sealing engines on racing boats that might briefly need to motor in an emergency, like, for example, collision avoidance.

Another east coast enthusiast from Britain is Max Scott, a printer from Clacton, who sets off with his

wife, son and daughter in their Oyster 35, *Waygoose* (the derivation of the name: 17th century annual outing provided by master printer for his staff before the autumn start of work by candlelight). His daughter has just qualified professionally, and his son received a redundancy pay-off, so the timing is perfect.

The race, part-sponsored by the Gibraltar Tourist Board, attracts all sorts. The 45ft *Resolution* is skippered by George Parkinson, a jazz musician from New York, while the British *Exton* has on board among the crew a policeman from Surrey.

Although speeds vary among the three classes, Cornell estimates that no boat will ever be more than 100 miles from a colleague for assistance in case of emergency. Each vessel has to make confirmation radio calls twice a day, on this journey of a lifetime.

Weekend, page 1

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Southwell
Going standard
12.50 (m) 1. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 2. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 3. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 4. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 5. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 6. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 7. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 8. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 9. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 10. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 11. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 12. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 13. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 14. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 15. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 16. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 17. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 18. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 19. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 20. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 21. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 22. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 23. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 24. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 25. *ANABUSI* (J. Dalton, 2-1) v. 26. *Swinging Tich* (A. Mackay, 12-1) v. 27. *Queens* (C. Dalton, 12-1) v. 28. *ANABUSI* (J. 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Walker raises questions of football's morality



Deehan: in charge

EVERTON'S courtship of Mike Walker demonstrates, once again, that football ethics, so-called gentlemen's agreements, fall quicker than snow sliding off a leaf in a rapid thaw.

When Walker defected from Norwich City yesterday on the eve of the FA Cup third round — the one remaining tournament Norwich could win this season — the timing was, to say the least, tawdry. Yet when the man speaks of putting family security as his highest priority, who can condemn him? The government talks of Back To Basics, it implies family values and the massive assurance that Everton appear willing to put Walker's way — reportedly £600,000 for a four-year contract — is beyond anything that Norwich could, or apparently would, offer to try to keep him.

That does not excuse the behaviour of Everton Football Club. For the second time in a little over three years, this club has driven a snowplough through an agreement made between club chairmen not to poach another club's manager in season.

Of course, Everton insist they have done everything by the book. They say that they asked permission to approach Walker and, when this was denied, they made no indirect efforts to entice him. Humbug. Dr David Marsh, for the time being Everton's chairman, had made it plain on BBC Radio 5 that Everton's interest was in Walker and that no other manager was on their list. That is akin to the police naming a murder suspect and saying no other line of inquiry would be pursued.

Obviously, in FA Cup week, or any other time, this put



ROB HUGHES
Football Commentary

Norwich in an invidious situation. Norwich, Britain's pride in Europe this season and a club so well-run that it puts to shame some of the supposedly bigger clubs, like Everton, could hardly defend itself from such an overture. It followed closely the pre-Christmas raid on Southampton by Birmingham City to sign its manager, Barry Fry.

What makes it worse was yesterday morning's little charade when Walker and Everton simultaneously informed the press that he had quit his post at Norwich and only then did he send a fax to

Everton applying for the vacant managership there.

They insult the intelligence of football followers. Above all else, Walker has proved in his year and a half guiding Norwich is that he is nobody's fool and that he is a hard, disciplined man. Can you, therefore, accept that he took a chance on his career and walked out on his players, supporters and employers simply because he believed press speculation that Everton might be willing to treble the £50,000 basic wage he felt Norwich inadequately paid him?

You might conclude that it would be a duty to your family to accept such terms as Everton's offer. Even if Walker were to fail there, if contracts mean anything in law, the salary would secure his future for the next decade. Robert Chase, his chairman at Norwich, clearly knew there was a danger of losing his manager.

In Milan in November, when Atlético Madrid reportedly showed interest in Walker, Chase made no attempt to offer his manager then any security beyond the roll-on contract that would be renewed, both parties willing, next June. In other words, Norwich were prepared to show no more faith in Walker than the five remaining months on his current, low basic wage, deal.

Therefore, blaming Mike Walker as an individual is not

on. During last week, he said bitterly: "Don't talk to me about loyalty. Loyalty doesn't pay. I was successful at Colchester and all it got me was the sack." But yesterday, Walker demonstrated that disloyalty is a two-way process. Kendall was, until last month, the manager at Everton. He had returned there in November 1989, jilting Manchester City with the words that "City was a love affair. Everton is a marriage". A marriage in his case, twice divorced.

However, if managers and chairmen are prepared to ridicule the contracts that bind them, can there be any wonder that players and their agents treat football clubs and supporters' loyalty as things they pass in the night? Walker said he left Norwich with nothing on his conscience. Everton said that they made no ungentlemanly approach. The truth

is, Walker was poached. The question to be answered is how good a manager he is. He came from the Norwich backroom staff. He thus knows that his success was in taking the managerial role at the time when years, more than a decade, of prodigious and diligent coaching from youth level onwards, came to fruition.

Certainly, Walker wrung more out of it in terms of consistency and hardness, but he never managed alone. His assistant, his coach, John Deehan will be in charge of Norwich in Walker's stead and, unless the disloyalty is propounded, unless Walker like so many managers attempts to take his assistant and other members of the staff with him, we shall see Mike Walker trying to manage a badly-run club with Norwich methods but from scratch.

Conditions ideal for underdogs in FA Cup

By KEITH PIKE

LAST season it was Liverpool, the year before that, Arsenal. Perhaps the only predictable thing about the third-round of the FA Cup is that, somewhere, the unpredictable will happen, and that one of the well-heeled clubs will stumble.

Lofty ambition pitted against lowly opposition, oblivious to its own limitations, provides an explosive mixture, especially in a season when one route to European riches is already all but closed, with Manchester United 13 points clear in the FA Carling Premiership, and only the runners-up guaranteed a place in the UEFA Cup.

The weather is preparing to play a significant part. Unfamiliar surroundings are sometimes enough on their own to unsettle the elite. Add a frozen pitch or a mudheap, and the odds tilt even further towards the underdogs.

Surprisingly, in view of the snow that fell upon saturated

fourth round will have been made. Which unlikely survivors will figure in it? Bristol City, perhaps. In two-and-a-half seasons in charge at Anfield, Graeme Souness has experienced both the delight and despair of the FA Cup, winning it in 1992 and then losing at home to Bolton Wanderers in a third-round replay last January. Souness later survived a concerted bid to oust him, but defeat today and questions about his future would inevitably be raised again.

There were signs on Tuesday, when Liverpool recovered from 3-0 down to draw with the champions, that Souness may soon have a team capable of upholding Anfield tradition, but conditions at Ashton Gate will not suit them. "The centre of the pitch is rather marshy," Martin Bodenham, the referee, admitted before giving the go-ahead.

Liverpool, who will be without Mark Wright, are one of 11 Premiership sides — including Chelsea, who surely will not fail against Barnet in a tie switched to Stamford Bridge — drawn away from home. Others at risk include Aston Villa, seven-times winners, Queens Park Rangers and Norwich City.

Exeter City were so keen for their tie against Villa to be played that Danny Bailey, their midfield player, donned full Red-Indian costume to perform a ceremonial "anti-rain" dance at St James' Park. Exeter have not reached the fourth round since 1981. Villa have been beaten only twice in 17 away games this season, but according to Alan Ball, the Exeter manager, "the form book goes out of the windows in these games. My players could freeze, or they could really get after Villa."

Rangers must contend with the 6ft 7in Stockport striker, Kevin Fandis, at Edgeley Park. Wycombe Wanderers will hope to capitalise on any discontent in the Norwich camp, while of the Premiership sides at home to Endsleigh League opposition, Manchester City, Southampton and Oldham Athletic are far from safe bets.



Wondering where the Wanderers' future lies, O'Neill in his familiar place in the Wycombe dugout before today's FA Cup third-round visit of Norwich City

O'Neill presents right managerial credentials

Andrew Longmore ON a man with mixed feelings about Norwich's fortunes

Wycombe Wanderers have been taking an unusually keen interest in the managerial tug-of-war at Norwich. It is not just that the departure of Mike Walker could have unsettled their opponents nicely in time for the third round of the FA Cup today, but that Martin O'Neill, the ebullient chatterbox who has been at the heart of Wycombe's rise to prominence over the past three years, is sure to be among the candidates to fill the vacancy.

At least O'Neill, with a typically extrovert flourish, hopes he will be "I would be deeply disappointed if my name was not among the candidates," he said.

Not that the Irishman, who turned down the chance to follow Brian Clough at Nottingham Forest, would be guaranteed to accept. He knows he still has work to do at Wycombe, who have high ambitions but are, like Norwich, a model of low-budget maintenance, and that he has a freedom to do it not enjoyed by too many managers in the country.

"Let's face it, it would be good for the ego to be considered if it came down to it," O'Neill added, "but it did last summer, about finishing the job here and then push off four months later. What am I saying? To be honest, I'm not really sure."

It is one those twists of fate so central to this stage of the Cup that victory for Wycombe over one of his former clubs this afternoon would be an ideal advertisement for the claims of O'Neill as well as the growing prestige of the club he has guided from the middle of the GM Vauxhall Conference into the thick of the race for promotion to the Endleigh Insurance League second division. Visions of those other two "Ws", Wimbledon and Watford, hang over Wycombe's spanking new ground at Adams Park, but the exploits of Norwich provide a further example of what can be done by well-run clubs determined to live within their means.

Not in their wildest dreams could Wycombe ever become a Liverpool

or a Manchester United. But Norwich City? With the right manager, good organisation, sensible accountability and a slice of luck, there is just a chance Wycombe are already making plans for the next decade while trying to keep a healthy sense of perspective.

"It is a difficult balance for a small club to maintain," John Goldsborough, the long-serving secretary of Wycombe, said. "We're not wanting to rush things, but we're not going to sit back and wait until they happen either. We're ambitious and we have to plan ahead." Wycombe's constitution, set up in 1966, two years after the club's centenary, ensures that no egos will get in the way. The club has 200 shareholders, each holding the maximum of one share. Each share costs a pound and anyone who has

held a season ticket for three years is eligible to buy one. The most any of them could lose is £10.

Quite whether the foundations of support are as solid as the set-up, only a long barren spell will tell. Crowds this season average just over 5,000, an increase of nearly 3,000 over the past three years, from a catchment area estimated at 150,000, while 25,000 supporters travelled to Wembley for the final of the FA Trophy last year. However, their loyalty has not been tested yet.

"We've progressed more quickly than anyone believed was possible, but I really don't know how much further we can go," O'Neill said. "It's been a steady rise all the way, there's been no plateau, but anyone who thinks there won't be one is in for a massive awakening. When I've lost four on the trot, I'll know what the situation really is here."

Since his arrival three years ago, O'Neill has worked hard to establish a tradition that moulds the old Corinthian ways with a tougher, more professional attitude. All ex-

cept two of the staff have turned full-time this season and the ease with which the side has adapted to league football suggests that O'Neill has found the right blend.

Equally important, he has fashioned a club in the image of the community — smart, modern, cost-conscious, streamlined and, for the moment, successful. The new ground, with its low level red brick offices and neat stands, fits perfectly into its surrounds on a soulless light industrial estate on the outskirts of the town and the ill-fitting which accompanied the move from the more characterful Louisa Park has largely been submerged.

Wanderers came top of a survey carried out recently by a new local radio station to establish what the five most topics of conversation were on the streets and local companies have been quick to identify themselves with such a progressive club. Victory today in only the club's third visit to this stage of the Cup in their 109-year history might show O'Neill as well exactly where his future lies.



FA CUP

pitches on Thursday, only one of today's 30 ties — Luton Town against Southend United — has so far been postponed, although several more are subject to pitch inspections. The Football Association has urged all home clubs to make arrangements for early decisions, but with wintry showers forecast, as well as a widespread frost, there may be more casualties. The FA hopes clubs will be able to arrange with local police for postponed matches to be rearranged for next week, rather than wait the statutory ten days.

The favourites, Manchester United, do not play until tomorrow, against Sheffield United at Bramall Lane, where defeat in the fifth round last season helped concentrate their minds on the championship. The holders, Arsenal, launch their campaign at Millwall on Monday, by which time the draw for the

Optimism at realistic Wanderers

FA CUP matches at Burnden Park between Bolton Wanderers and the big-city clubs have always had a special flavour. Troubled Everton's visit today will continue the tradition, bringing Bolton's vibrant managerial team of Bruce Rioch and Colin Todd up against one of their old clubs. Bolton have a great cup tradition, as Liverpool, their last major victims 12 months ago, learned the hardest way.

Nowadays with a super-market at one end, Burnden lacks the resonance of the times when 50,000 watched Nat Lofthouse terrify goalkeepers, and Tommy Banks and Roy Hartle send wingers crashing on to the cinder track.

But the stadium will have a full all-ticket crowd of 22,500, and after the week's rain the pitch will be heavy, ideal for the kind of sliding tackle beloved of underdogs or old Bolton full backs.

Everton at least have no need to fear being kicked up in

Peter Ball looks at a traditional club whose modern style could add to Everton's woes

the air. These days, under Bruce Rioch, Bolton are a passing side, playing some delightful football, but the threat they offer is a serious one, with some telling parallels with last season when they defeated Liverpool.

"It is very similar to last year," Rioch said. "We were in very good form, and had a run of 15 games undefeated, which ended at West Brom the game before we met Liverpool. This year we were meeting the other Merseyside team, having just ended a 16-game unbeaten run when we lost at Wolverhampton."

Of Everton's problems Rioch said: "When you've been on a losing run, it is the mental toughness rather than the physical that is the real issue. But we approach the game knowing that the it will be most difficult, because irre-

spective of the difficulties at Goodison, they are still a Premier League team with international players, and they will come here expecting to win.

"But we can approach the game knowing that we will



Rioch: stimulated

require to give 100 per cent effort, and to enjoy it. They don't come any bigger than Everton, so we must look forward to a game like that. It stimulates everybody, it stimulates the players, the town, the directors."

Bolton is a real football town, and it does not take much to stimulate it. Since Rioch arrived 18 months ago, the club has begun to revive, with promotion and a significant cup run last season. Today's game will be the third full house in a year, and 13,000 came for the match with Sunderland last week.

Paul McGinley returns to give Bolton a cutting edge and Everton caretaker manager, Jimmy Gabriel, is made happier by the return to fitness of Paul Riddout and Matt Jackson. Both passed fitness tests yesterday to confirm their places in a 16-man squad which Gabriel hopes will bring him a first victory in his last game as temporary manager.

SOME compliments are suspicious. John Lambie, the Partick Thistle manager, is wary when you suggest that he has been signing droves of skilful players in the past year or two. Perhaps he fears that he is being accused of prissiness. Idealism is a dreadful charge to level against a club still trying to secure its place in the premier division.

Therefore, Lambie sidesteps the praise: "I wish I had a different team I could play for the away games. It would be good if we had the Paul once sort of player in the midfield." Newcomers bearing a passable resemblance to Giggs and Cantona would not go amiss either. Still, you take his point.

In their last sortie out of Firhill, Thistle were beaten 5-1 by Hibernian at Easter Road. Recollection of that is unlikely to comfort a Celtic side weakened by injury as they travel to meet Lambie's team today. At home, Thistle have been crisp rather than brittle; Aberdeen

Kevin McCarra finds the Partick Thistle manager deflecting praise for his work

were beaten there and Rangers had to scramble for a point.

In the soothing surroundings of their home ground, a midfield that looks fanciful can be beguiling. Ian Cameron, Albert Craig and Alex Taylor are stylists rather than sluggers. In November, Lambie even added to the artistry by bringing Chic Charnley, who had been playing in Sweden, back to the club.

Although Charnley is a delicate user of the ball, rough-house incidents have brought a history of red cards. Nonetheless, while many observers regard him as a gilded wastrel, he has still to exhaust his talent.

"Chic has the ability," Lambie said, "and it is just a matter of getting him to use it. All the doubts about him are

in other people's minds, not mine."

Praise of Thistle is repulsed. "Look at Falkirk last season," he insisted. "They were going to Parkhead, Ibrox and Pittodrie and being told they played great football. What happened in the end? They got relegated." He insisted his own decisions at Firhill have only been pragmatic.

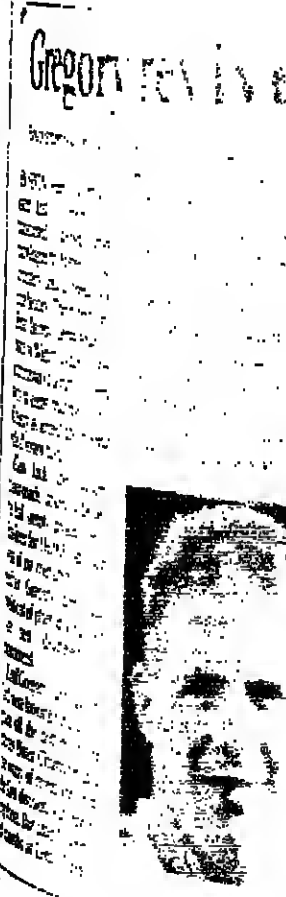
Certainly you would not mistake him for a misty-eyed theorist. He can be loud and crude on occasion and disputes with players have not been uncommon. It is said that he occasionally took a golf club with him last season and practised his swing while the squad trained in a nearby park. The odd ball whistled past players. Not everyone appreciated this method of developing their alertness. The zest for the game that

sustains him in this, his second spell as Thistle manager, is, however, undoubted. Lambie does not flinch from the task of overhauling his side. Freshness is all at a club that must struggle each season for a handhold in the premier division.

Half of the present team have been signed since the summer. They were assembled in flagrant defiance of the belief that you cannot get something for nothing. Indeed, his moves in the transfer market almost amount to legerdemain. Craig, who was taken on after being released by Dundee, has scored a handsome 14 goals from midfield.

Whether he admits it or not, Lambie has always been ready to depend on those who have been branded as unreliable elsewhere and there has invariably been a winger or two in his teams. As opponents have found out, the supposedly frivolous talents can do some serious damage.

Wigan legend
Inga th



Wigan legend is hoping for great things from the club's £400,000 Samoan

'Inga the Wiganer' takes his bow

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THERE is no folk hero bigger in Wigan than Billy Boston. Yesterday, the player bought for £400,000 from New Zealand rugby union to try and emulate him was asked for his opinion of the legend.

"To be honest, I've never heard of him," said Tuigamala. "I was told he was a big fella, but this lad's got the size and more. The people round here can't wait to see him get stuck in."

A drop kick from Central Park, Boston was serving his lunchtime regulars at the Griffin Hotel. Here, comparisons between the Wigan sides of yesterday and today flow as freely as the ale, and the debating society had the qualities of Boston and Tuigamala at the top of its agenda.

Boston, scorer of 478 tries for Wigan between 1953 and 1966, thought Tuigamala's ignorance rather refreshing. "It's here and now that's important and I hope he breaks every record in the book," he said. "I grew into a big fella, but this lad's got the size and more. The people round here can't wait to see him get stuck in."

At the earliest, it will be two or three weeks before Tuigamala, 24, makes his first appearance. As well as acclimatising himself, he will have to shift a few surplus pounds in weight.

"I do have a problem. Most Polynesians, when they don't train, blow up. I don't think now I'm here, there's a possibility of that happening," he said. His natural bulk has helped the Samoan crash through defences throughout his rugby life. But in the 13-man code, the tackles come in more frequently and the requirements for upper body strength are much greater.

On the day that 'Inga the Wiganer' finally became 'Inga the Wiganer', he expressed no regrets at having turned his back on the All Blacks after 19 international appearances. He was happy to have secured financial security for his family — his contract at Wigan runs until 1998 — and was looking forward to a new career in a game that seems ideally suited to his explosive running and muscular directness.

Tuigamala said he was looking forward to playing alongside Martin Offiah and was surprised to hear rumours that the Great Britain



Tuigamala poses in Wigan's well-stocked trophy room yesterday after meeting his new team-mates. Photograph: Barry Greenwood

winger might be moving. "I'm just glad to be here," he said. "If the coach stuck me at prop, I'd be happy. It will take a while, I've got to work my way into the team and the way of playing."

Where he will probably end up is centre, as a replacement for Dean Bell, the captain, who is joining Auckland War-

riors at the end of the season, although Tuigamala's natural instinct during his first work-out was to move out to the left wing. "Habits die hard, I suppose," he said.

He accepted Wigan's offer, which he renewed last summer, after the New Zealand tour had helped him gauge the severity of the challenge.

While there was funding for education and business from the New Zealand Rugby Football Union, it came nowhere near matching Wigan's pay cheque.

Whether Tuigamala will be the last of the present crop of All Blacks to change codes is the subject of increasing speculation. The new Auckland

club, which has already raided several English rugby league sides, is reportedly hopeful of picking up another union defector.

"It's really up to the players themselves," Tuigamala said. "Rugby union has been really good to me and given me a base to move on and take the opportunities in another

field." The first of these will come later this month in Wigan's Alliance game, when the attendance of 8,000 for the reserve match which marked Boston's debut could well be surpassed.

Today, he will be in the stand at Salford for Wigan's Regal Trophy semi-final to begin the learning process.

Gregory revives Salford's challenge

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

N SEVEN weeks, a rejuvenated Andy Gregory has transformed Salford from a relegation candidate to a cup contender, and a good deal more besides. Their televised Regal Trophy semi-final at home to Wigan today is the culmination of a run of seven wins in eight matches since Gregory assumed the pivotal role of scrum half.

Garry Jack, the Salford player-coach, asked whether he had simply picked up a has-been for £10,000, said age was of no relevance. At 32, neither Gregory nor Jack looks out of place in a Salford side best described as experienced.

Until Gregory's arrival, Salford were looking their age. A place off the bottom of the Stones Bitter Championship, the worry of relegation from the first division was haunting them. But after 15 wretched months at Leeds, Gregory

has brought about his salvation and that of the team.

With the move from Wigan to Leeds in 1992, his halcyon years seemed at an end. Injuries and a clash of egos at Headingley left Gregory dispirited and disaffected.

Proof that confidence is a state of mind was immediately found at Salford, as Gregory cast off his cares to lead them to a first away win in a



Gregory: pivotal role

year on his debut at Hull Kingston Rovers. One man may not make a team, but he can make it tick, and Gregory has conjured some new tricks, a place in the final against Castleford at Headingley in two weeks' time should be theirs.

In the mud at Batley, carrying a knee injury, he came off the bench at half-time to turn a deficit of 8-0 into a 12-3 victory in the third round. Yet it was a bewitching display in the quarter-finals four days later to demolish Hull which endorsed the view that Gregory still possesses few peers.

Gregory is looking forward to the confrontation with his former half-back partner, Shaun Edwards, who passed a fitness test on his injured shoulder yesterday. "Wigan are odds-on favourites and they are as strong now as ever," Gregory said. "But they're only human, and cup shocks can happen, as I know only too well here."

Salford overcame Wigan 24-14 in the third round of the

same competition in 1991. The holders have been this way before, and unless Gregory can conjure some new tricks, a place in the final against Castleford at Headingley in two weeks' time should be theirs.

Bradford Northern, who have suffered two successive defeats, yesterday dismissed their former player-coach and captain, David Hobbs, and the hooker, Brian Noble. The club also put up for sale the centre, Steve McGowan, for £40,000, and the Welsh wing, Gerald Cordle, for £15,000. Chris Caisley, the Bradford chairman, said a greater emphasis would be put on youth.

At the top of the first division, Warrington must beat a resurgent Leeds at home tomorrow to move ahead of Wigan once more. After their defeat at Hull in midweek, Bradford have the chance to revive their championship ambitions at home to Oldham.

Britain make smart use of substitutions

FROM SYDNEY FRISKIN IN BARCELONA

GREAT Britain made the start they wanted in the Three Nations hockey tournament by beating Belgium 3-0 at the Real Club de Polo here yesterday.

An early offensive led to a goal in 56 seconds with Robert Thompson flinging himself forward to score from a centre by Don Williams. Several substitutions were then made in the British team — with the desired effect.

Chris Mayer made his entrance after Williams had been tripped by Jean Buiset. Soon, Robert Churchill and Phillip McGuire made their appearance in the attack which underwent a few positional changes.

Eight minutes into the second half Russell Garcia indirectly converted a short corner for the second goal and added the third from a similar award

ten minutes later with a brilliant flick into the net. This marked the beginning of a series of three short corners in the match.

However, Britain survived a few moments of anxiety. Their goal had a remarkable escape in the fifteenth minute when Erik Vandergracht shot wide from ten yards. The same player missed a chance at even closer quarters shortly after Britain's second goal.

Britain had used four substitutes, the odd man out being David Luckes, who was kept on the bench by Simon Mason's sound goalkeeping. Belgium made only one substitution.

OTHER RESULTS: Los Reyes Tour-

Tackle catches Kangaroos on the hop



SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

GREAT anxiety excites great passions. The dreaded Langer Leg Tackle has divided Australia and provoked a snarling row the length and breadth of rugby league. It looks as if the rules of the game will be changed to curb the effectiveness of a single player. Naturally his team, Brisbane Broncos, thinks the whole thing is a terrible devious Sydney plot. Parish *la pensee*, says Outraged of Sydney.

At the heart of the matter is Allan "Alfie" Langer, scrum half of Brisbane and Australia. He is 5ft 5in and 11st, which is not a lot of body for this rather rough game. But he has invented a brilliant way of stopping opponents: he grabs them with one hand and scythes them down with his leg. Jolly effective, but not quite 100 per cent legal.

At least, opposition coaches have been crying foul, and the Australian Rugby League has called for a ban. The matter comes up for discussion when the International Rugby League Board meets next month. Brisbane is furious. The *Brisbane Courier-Mail* ran a blistering editorial on the subject. "I suppose that sort of thing was predictable," Ken Arthurson, chief executive of the Australian Rugby League, said. "But it is absolute rubbish to suggest that this was a plot hatched by New South Welshmen to curb Langer's style." Indeed, the Australian team tours Great Britain in October, and a curbed Langer would be a sad thing for the Kangaroos.

Happy new year

Thanks to the Dutch Football Federation for the nice Christmas card it sent to *The Times*. It shows a grinning Dutch supporter, and bears the happy legend: "See you in the USA."

Artful Dodge

An early bid for marathon runner of the year comes from the great Cathy Dodge. She has just learnt that she has been disqualified from the San Francisco marathon, run last summer. Dodge was one of the leading finishers in the marathon section. But belated checking of the race videos showed that she did not pass through all the checkpoints. Boston race officials double-checked their own videos and, surprise surprise, the not-inapparently named Ms Dodge had done it again.

Boston is a bit hypersensitive on this point; in 1980, the great Rosie Ruiz ran only the finish and was the official winner for days before she was rumbled. However, the greatest marathon hero of them all is Abbas Tehami, who came within an ace of taking the first prize of £4,000 in the Brussels marathon in 1991. But lynx-eyed officials noticed that the man wearing No 62 at the start was short



and moustached. The victorious runner was tall and clean-shaven. Tehami's coach, Bensalem Hamiani, had run the first seven miles of the race before handing over to Tehami.

Irish out of luck

Now we all understand about sport, don't we? Everybody tries to beat everybody else, and the team or individual that beats most people is the winner. Simple. But not in American college football, a colossal popular game that obsesses half the nation. In a world where democracy has run crazy, the best college team is, believe it or not, decided by a vote. The propensity for horrific rows is almost infinite, and the United States is reeling under a spectacular example of the same.

The reason for this eccentric system is that not all the leading teams play against each other. So the ranking is decided by the "Top 25 Coaches Poll". After the last game was played on January 1, the situation was that Florida State University, a.k.a. the Seminoles, and Notre Dame ("The Fighting Irish") had each lost one game. On November 13, the Seminoles lost theirs — to the Irish, who won 31-24. That, to a layman, would seem to be decisive. Not a bit of it. It was the Seminoles who were voted top team. The coach of the Irish, Lou Holtz, was bitter: "I guess head-to-head confrontation doesn't count for much." It is only, after all, the very stuff of sport.

Rockets take off

The football match of the season so far involved Rockeare Rockets against Bradrich in Devon. The Rockets were losing 6-2 when the referee, Ian Barnett, sent off the fifth member of their side. They had already been persuaded to return from a walk-off protest, but the final straw came when Gary White, the Rockets skipper, was sent off for dissent.

The match was then abandoned because FIFA insists on seven a side as a minimum for proper football. "It wasn't a nasty game," Dave Clapp, vice-president of the club and the goalkeeper, who was sent off for a professional foul, said. "But that obviously wasn't how the referee saw it."

FOOTBALL

Goal of 3.0 unless stated
all other matches

FA Cup

Third round

Manchester v Chelsea (at Stamford Bridge)

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

Blackburn v Portsmouth

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

Blackburn v Portsmouth

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

Blackburn v Portsmouth

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Blackburn v Portsmouth

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

GM Vauxhall Conference

First round

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

Blackburn v Portsmouth

Sheff Wed v Bristol City

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Beazer Homes League

First round

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Blackburn v Portsmouth

RUGBY UNION

First round

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Saturday portrait: Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean by Andrew Longmore

First couple of dance melting hearts with a show of perfection

Like those faithful musical pairings, love and marriage, and horse and carriage, you can't have one without the other. Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean are merely extraordinary athletes; together, they live with an intensity which extends way beyond the boundaries of sport.

Andrew Guild, the co-producer of the couple's professional tours, could summon just one comparison from 30 years of presenting theatre, ballet, circus and dance. Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev. They have the same power to mesmerise an audience. Even in practice, you find yourself drawn into watching them and no one else. You scratch your head and ask 'why' because seeing them off the ice you wouldn't suspect they could possess such magic.

But only together. Only together have they been able to touch perfection, excite the soul and lift ice dancing out of its precious little world and into the grasp of everybody who has a drop of emotion in their bodies. Like screen idols, they have played out a relationship in full public view and if Hollywood would long since have had the small-town couple who conquered the world skating off into the sunset to live happily ever after, the reality is much less corny and far more complex.

Since the day in 1975 when Janet Sawbridge, their first coach, looked down a list of possible partners for Dean and chose Jayne Torvill, there has been an element of destiny about their careers. They have been European champions three times, world champions four times and were British champions for six consecutive years from 1978, quite apart from winning Olympic gold in 1984.

From the early days in Nottingham, where he was a policeman and she a building society clerk, they have skated through love, very probably through joy, pain, anguish, doubt and emerged on the other side of the sunset. Through it all, their business partnership, their original friendship and, as the audience at the Sheffield Arena will find out again

today, their creative energy remain intact. Longevity is what marks Torvill and Dean out from the host of great teams in sport, music and theatre, who have blossomed and died in their moment of ultimate glory. "We still have the rapport we always had," Dean said. "We get on as people."

They have enjoyed their moment of ecstasy, at the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo in 1984, when their interpretation of Ravel's *Bolero* made time stand still and rendered the notion of perfection temporarily obsolete. That night was about more than just business, more than winning or losing a gold medal, it was a display of intimacy between two people so committed to their passion they did not care if the whole world tuned in. It had to be

Only together have they been able to touch perfection and lift ice dancing out of its precious little world

that, didn't it? "It was St Valentine's Day and I gave Jayne an orchid," Dean said. "She gave me a kiss. When we knelt down on the ice we looked into each other's eyes and saw total commitment. It was almost as if we were looking into each other's soul." That is not the ordinary language of victory. Even the more pragmatic Torvill talked of a "kind of trance". And yet, perhaps we all presumed the nature of the commitment, mistook sexual attraction for perfect professionalism.

Maybe it was, after all, a commitment to winning, to fulfilling an unspoken pact entered during hours and hours of practice through childhood and into youth. Maybe the world saw what it wanted to see and the harmony, the instinctive understanding one of the other was pure chance or the product of total dedication. As Dean himself asked once: "What's

the chance of somebody else coming along with the same temperament, the right age, in the right place, at the right time?" At times, during arduous eight-show a week tours, Torvill and Dean have had to be bullied into skating *Bolero*, which might have been a reflection of staleness or of changing patterns in their relationship. It must be hard to summon the required emotion looking into the eyes of a business partner.

Some pieces of the jigsaw can be fitted together with certainty. Physically, the two are almost ideal ice dance partners. Torvill is just over 5ft tall, strong, but not too overmuscled or heavy. Dean just under 6ft, neat, lithe, powerful. During their professional tour routines, he had to lift Torvill's 7½ st 96 times an evening. Both are by nature perfectionists.

"I never once, in four years of touring, ever saw them give less than their all. They never cheated the public," Jeannie Macpherson, their road manager, said. Nor have they been content just to soak up the money and the adulation. There was always another challenge to be found, of which a return to Olympic competition is the latest and, possibly, the last.

"They never took the easy option," Betty Calloway, their faithful coach, said last week. "They have kept stretching themselves with every new number they did." They also enjoy a natural friendship, based on shared interests like ballet, dance, clothes, which has been strong enough to absorb all the inevitable strains of working together for nearly 20 years. They still socialise off the ice, though Jayne is married to Phil Christensen, a sound engineer who once worked for Genesis, and Chris has come through a brief but traumatic marriage to the French-Canadian skater, Isabelle Duchesnay. Since July, they have practised four hours a day in Milton Keynes, the intensity undimmed by their years on the road.

Temperamentally, they are well suited. Dean's flights of imagination being balanced by Torvill's realism. She is nearly a year older, 36 to 35, but matured more



quickly. "I wouldn't discount Jayne's power in the relationship by one per cent," Guild said. "To look at them, you would imagine he's the boss, but Jayne has tremendous strength of character. She isn't a wallflower, believe me."

Yet even those who have watched them, worked with them most closely during the years either cannot or do not want to reveal the hidden element in the formula. Love, desire, respect, understand-

ing, tolerance, friendship, frustration, anger, determination. They have all been mixed in at some point, the amounts of each ingredient doubtless changing with every passing phase of their lives. But the magic can still only be deduced, not defined.

"I don't know what their relationship is based on," Macpherson said. "It's not like husband and wife, it's not lovers, it's not brother and sister. Maybe it's just knowing

each other so well and being able to accept each other's faults. They are kindred spirits."

Today, when they perform their new free dance routine for the first time at the British ice dance championships, we will know more. They have always revealed themselves on the ice and nothing in their meticulous preparations suggests that this will be any different.

But what, after all the years, is

left? The fun, the fluidity and the creativity, certainly. Their choice of music is revealing. *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, *Vaudeville* instead of Ravel; fantasy romance, in place of smouldering passion. The audience will not see another *Bolero* nor feel the tension. What they will see is grace, sport, art and two lives merging into one for a precious four minutes in which they should let their imaginations run as free as the wind.

Batsmen struggle as bowlers take control

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN VERWOERDURG

CENTURION Park, with its Roman overtones, is an apt name for this green bowl of a ground when the cricketers are in such fear of their lives. On a cracked pitch, which behaved no less spitefully when the ball was old than when the shine was on, the batsmen might have addressed the groundsmen: "Those who are about to die salute you."

This was a riveting day's play, as long as you were 100 yards away. Every over held interest after Northern Transvaal won the toss. Those directly involved might have enjoyed something less awkward, like crossing the Kalahari with nails in their boots. The ball leapt and spat like a hooked marlin. England resume 57 runs behind with six wickets intact and must bat soberly if they are to take a decisive lead.

Morris remains there on a hard-earned 29 and England need him. Loye and Wells to make substantial scores. They will not want to chase too many batting last on this pitch. Last night, with his tail up, Steve Elworthy looked the best and most hostile bowler England have faced on this tour. If he does not come to England this summer, the

South Africans must have some outstanding seamers.

Pace is only part of it. Rudi Bryson, who spent a forgettable summer at Surrey in 1992, is undeniably brisk, but now, as then, he sprayed it like a drunken sailor with a hosepipe. Elworthy hit the spot that Cork had located earlier and, being faster than Cork, made it rear alarmingly. His overnight figures are three for 22 from 13 excellent overs.

One of them, a maiden to Crawley, provided some of the best cricket of the tour. Elworthy got the ball to kick off a length, cut it back, swung it away and finally hit him on the helmet. Crawley played or — the mark of the true batsman — did not play with

great assurance as Geoff Boycott, watching from the pavilion, must have noted. Then he got himself out.

Crawley always does his prep. Latwell is the type who borrows other people's notes. Having got off the mark with a lucky boundary when a Bryson bouncer caught the shoulder of his bat, he selected a pull shot before Elworthy had bowled the ball and had his stumps rearranged. He should have been sent to bed without supper.

Others did their homework. Iltot bowled a marvellous spell with the new ball, taking three for 12, and McCague, who had problems of rhythm and line earlier, came back well after lunch. Cork bowled better than anyone and went empty-

handed. He seemed to know it was never going to be his day. He did not stamp or shout.

He did not strive to bowl too quickly, opting for a good length from which the ball would fly every now and again. He went past the bat so often he would have taken seven wickets on more fortunate days. His first ten overs brought: Northerns just five, singles and nobody hit him for four. It was beautiful bowling.

The last ball of Cork's final over summoned up his day. Instead of ending with his tenth maiden, Crawley and then Iltot surrendered overthrows, three runs in all, with more of the buffoonery that has disfigured England's outcricket. When the ball finally came to rest, Cork stuffed it in his pocket as if to put an end to the nonsense.

Two catches went down off McCague in the death throes of the innings before Cork, who grassed the second of them, held a good catch at second slip to give Iltot a deserved fourth wicket. Wonder of wonders, England achieved a direct run-out when Wells, at point, beat Bryson. On this tour, that is like being struck by lightning when there is no thunder in the air.

Odds are against wild-card winners

BY ROBERT KIRLEY

THE National Football League play-offs get under way this weekend with the first games in the wild-card programme, which rarely yields legitimate Super Bowl contenders.

Since 1970, 78 teams have participated in the play-offs as wild cards; the next-best finishers to the division winners. Four have reached the Super Bowl but only the 1980-81 Raiders took the championship, in Super Bowl XV.

Today, Pittsburgh, the best defenders in the American Football Conference (AFC), play the Kansas City Chiefs, of the AFC West, who are led by the evergreen passer, Joe Montana. Green Bay return to

FOOTBALL (won-loss records in brackets): Wild-card games: Today: Pittsburgh (9-7) at Kansas City (11-5); Green Bay (9-7) at Detroit (10-6). Tomorrow: Minnesota (8-7) at NY Giants (11-5); Denver (9-7) at LA Raiders (10-6). Conference semifinals: Jan 15: AFC: Pittsburgh, Denver or LA Raiders at Buffalo (12-4); NFC: Minnesota, NY Giants or Detroit at St. Francisco (10-6). Jan 16: AFC: Green Bay, Minnesota or LA Raiders at Dallas (12-4); AFC: Kansas City, LA Raiders or Denver at Houston (12-4). Conference finals: Jan 23 (at highest remaining seed): Super Bowl XXIV: Jan 30 (Georgia Dome, Atlanta).

Portia, where they were defeated by Detroit last weekend in a game that determined the National Football Conference (NFC) Central winners.

On Sunday, Minnesota, the third NFC Central team in the play-offs, are away to the New York Giants, who are in position to win the Super Bowl for the first time since their Super Bowl victory three years ago. Much credit must go to their first-year coach, Dan Reeves, formerly of Denver.

Denver face the Raiders, who prevailed in their overtime game last weekend. The Raiders have won eight of the past nine games between the clubs, but 17 of their past 21 contests have been decided by less than a touchdown.

Next weekend the favourites come in: with a reputation of the 1993 Dallas-Buffalo Super Bowl, won 52-17 by Dallas, a possibility. They enter the play-offs as the leading seeds in each conference.



Iltot had plenty to celebrate leading the England A attack yesterday

Wessels happy to relinquish South African captaincy

Keppler Wessels heads home from Sydney this weekend, leaving his South African team in better shape and better hands than seemed possible when his broken finger, sustained in dropping a slip catch, became the latest of many misfortunes which had dogged the side.

Suddenly, everything has changed, and Wessels acknowledges that the events of the past few days have hastened his departure from the captaincy. The closing stages of the stunning five-run Test defeat of Australia was orchestrated by Hansie Cronje, who, with Wessels' blessing, is soon to be more than merely caretaker captain.

"If it has to finish, I feel I have achieved what I set out to do," said Wessels yesterday. "I would have no bad feelings. In fact I would be

very happy. I am pleased at the way the team has come together and I would have no problem at all playing under Hansie."

With those words, Wessels gracefully averted any possible embarrassment if the official verdict indicates Cronje should now keep the job. Wessels, 36, will have recovered in time for the series against Australia in South Africa in March but he has a dodgy knee and a limited future. Cronje is 24, fit, ambitious and talented, a leader since schooldays and already succeeding Wessels as the most influential batsman in the side.

Apart from Jonty Rhodes, whose fame in his own land knows no bounds, Cronje is now the most marketable cricketer in South Africa. In Sydney, both men emphasised that such status need not be transient, for if it is their



ALAN LEE

Cricket Commentary

personalities and athleticism which has won admirers, it is their temperament which will win matches at the highest level. Others, such as Andrew Hudson and Daryll Cullinan, have been unable to translate their natural talent to a stage where mental fibre, as Graham Gooch called it, is the prerequisite. Rhodes and Cronje have high profiles but no great pretensions and will scrap and struggle to maximise their ability. Prepare to hear much more of this pair when South Africa come to

England later this year, for they are likely to number among the stars of the sporting summer. The same may be true of Allan Donald and the ultimate match-winner in Sydney, Fanie de Villiers. But de Villiers is rising 30, indicative of the generation for whom redemption came only just in time and of the problem now endemic to South Africa's cricket.

Put simply, South Africa no longer has enough players of the quality to compete for Test places. Even the team which beat Australia

has glaring weaknesses. And beneath it, the country's cream, is a very thin mixture indeed.

Alli Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, knows the next issue his board must address. "We have no depth in our cricket," he admitted. "The years of isolation meant that incentives were few and competition decreased almost unnoticed. We have a good national team but the resources in support are slim."

Typically, Bacher is already working to remedy this, with the institution of a cricket academy based unashamedly on the Australian equivalent. I understand that Eddie Barlow will be offered the chance to apply his bucolic enthusiasm in the cause of inspiring a new generation of South Africans.

It is an important task and an urgent one, though it is unlikely

that the South African public will be persuaded of its need right now. They have waited a very long time to reclaim a victory as significant as that this week and the team which Wessels moulded will rightly be lauded around the nation for days and weeks to come.

Wessels now believes that defeat in the first Test back, against West Indies two years ago, had beneficial affects. "We should have won that game but I believe it toughened us up," he said. "Our team is very young in international terms and tenacity is very important in getting us through."

It was that tenacity which enabled South Africa to win this week's Test. They are not, as far as man, as good as Australia, nor even as England, but if their athletes survive, they need not be beaten by either side in the coming months.

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Walker's move may spark FA enquiry

By Keith Pike

EVERTON are likely to have to face a Football Association commission over allegations that they persuaded Mike Walker to break his contract as manager of Norwich City.

Walker resigned from his position at Carrow Road yesterday morning, and a formal announcement of his appointment at Goodison Park was due to be made last night.

John Deehan, Walker's assistant at Norwich for 18 months, has been placed in temporary charge, and will select the team for the FA Cup third-round tie against Weymouth Wanderers at Adams Park today. Walker, who is thought to have agreed a three-and-a-half year contract that trebles his basic wage to £150,000 a year, should oversee Everton against Bolton Wanderers at Burnden Park.

Walker's decision to leave Norwich with six months of a one-year contract left to run

made against us," Jim Greenwood, their chief executive, said. The FA's powers of punishment are virtually unlimited, but should Everton be found guilty of making an illegal approach they would probably be fined and ordered to pay compensation.

Everton first made an official approach to Norwich for permission to speak to Walker on Tuesday, but were rebuffed by Robert Chase, the Norwich chairman. They are thought likely to quote in their defence a statement attributed to Chase on December 15, in which he said the club would not stand in Walker's way if he was approached by a bigger club. Walker had previously expressed his disappointment at Norwich's failure to offer him a new, improved contract.

Steve Coppell, chief executive of the League Managers' Association, gave qualified support to Walker. "The advice that I would have to give any manager is to honour his contract," Coppell said, "but anybody who knows the circumstances of Mike's situation would perhaps understand what he has done."

Having resigned yesterday morning, Walker sent a fax to Goodison Park informing them of his decision. "I also wish to inform you that I would like the opportunity of an interview for the vacant managerial position at Everton Football Club," Walker said.

Dr David Marsh, the Everton chairman, said: "When Mike resigned... we were delighted and advised Norwich of our intentions. Norwich have criticised the way we have handled this but we have no wish to respond."

Chase yesterday paid tribute to Walker's "major contribution" to Norwich's success in the past 18 months — they finished third in the Premier League last season, their highest placing, and enjoyed a successful run in the UEFA Cup on their debut in European competition.

"I am surprised Mike has walked away," Chase said. "I have got to know him very well over the last few months and it surprises me anyone would walk away from a football club a day before an important game. But these things happen in football and we have to learn to live with it."

Deehan admitted things had been "getting more difficult each day" as speculation over Walker's future continued. "It's a sad situation because we've had 18 very successful months," he said.

Morality questions, page 32
FA Cup preview, page 32

Bath overruled on fitness of pitch

By David Hand

THE foul weather which has hit sports fixtures up and down the country over the last week has also soured relationships between those long-standing rugby union rivals, Bath and Bristol. On Thursday today's first-division league fixture was off, then it was reconsidered and last night a Rugby Football Union (RFU) statement confirmed it was on once more.

The fixture had been in doubt since December 30, when Bath played Cardiff and turned the pitch into a quagmire, since then the neighbouring River Avon has risen and constant rain has prevented Bath's ground staff repairing the damage. Bath reversed Thursday's decision to postpone the game only after heavy pressure from Bristol who sent four officials to inspect the playing surface with Ed Morrison, the international referee, acting as an independent arbiter.

Morrison reported to the RFU competitions sub-com-

mittee that yesterday the ground was playable and Bristol's representations were upheld by the RFU, who clearly believed Bath had acted hastily at a time when the union has urged all clubs to leave postponement decisions as late as possible, so as to avoid a massive fixture backlog later in an already overcrowded season.

"We were forced into a corner," John Quinn, the Bath secretary, said. "We have complied with the RFU instruction and will attempt to play the game."

Only one of today's 30 FA Cup ties has been postponed, although several are subject to pitch inspections. The Football Association has urged home clubs to arrange for early decisions. Today's race meeting at Sandown Park has been called off and there will be an early morning inspection at Haydock Park to establish whether racing is possible.

Familiar rivals, page 35



Torvill and Dean casting long shadows over their rivals as the British ice dance championship got under way in Sheffield yesterday

Torvill and Dean again show they are class apart

By John Hennessey

JAYNE Torvill and Christopher Dean easily overcame the first obstacle in their return to competitive skating yesterday. They won the compulsory dances of the British championship, sponsored by Peoples Phone, at Sheffield, by a street.

This was too predictable for the event to carry any competitive bite. It was the manner of their performance, and the marks they seduced from the nine judges, which occupied universal attention.

Here there was some disappointment. Courtney Jones, once known as the hanging judge because of the severity of his pronouncements, surrendered almost completely with 5.9 for both the Starlight Waltz, his own creation, and the Blues — a perfect mark of 6.0 for the compulsory figure rare achievement — and his fall only a few times, even to Torvill and Dean.

We might, too, explain away the three marks of 5.6 for the waltz because Torvill and Dean were first to skate and judges in this sport are notoriously ungenerous to the early skaters, no matter how excellent their pedigree.

Bobby Thompson, Torvill and Dean's coach, said: "It was a consummate performance, skated with a technical elegance I have never before seen."

Certainly there was a lift and lean on deep edges that put them on a different plane. Their blues also had a stinky sensuousness that best comes to people who have had experience of mature adulthood. Youth in this discipline is a distinct disadvantage.

This was particularly so in the blues, where the highlight is a choctaw, an ice dance step from left foot inside to back outside. Their union was such throughout both dances that their free legs might have been glued together, were that not a slight handicap in the performance of ice skating.

RESULTS: Compulsory dances 1. J. Torvill and C. Dean (unattached) 0.4pts; 2. M. Hines and C. Loring (Glasgow) 0.2; 3. M. Farnham and V. G. G. (Glasgow) 1.2; 4. M. James and P. A. (Glasgow) 1.6; 5. J. D. and O. L. (Glasgow) 2.0; 6. G. Wilson and A. P. (Glasgow) 2.4; 7. J. K. and L. S. (Glasgow) 2.8; 8. V. F. and N. C. (Glasgow) 3.2; 9. L. C. and O. P. (Glasgow) 4.0.

Portrait, page 34

Young dance partners left to try for second-class honours

Simon Barnes on how T and D
chose to swap artistic freedom
for the challenge of competition



THIS is not a good time to be Marika Humphreys, aged 17 of Slough. Nor is it any better to be Justin Lanning, aged 20, and also from Slough. They are rather in the position of the school champions turning up to a French prose writing competition and discovering that Marcel Proust was taking part.

You have not heard of Marika and Justin. They are charming-looking, fresh-faced young people, but also people of ambition and achievement. They are, as it happens, the British ice dance champions. The chances of this still being true at tea-time today are remote.

For they have, of course, come up against the nearest thing this strange and not untacky art-form/sport-form has approached to M. Proust: Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, who have returned to competitive ice dancing, very much à la recherche du temps perdu.

That involves, as one of those regrettable necessities, the slaying of the sweet young pair from Slough at this, the Peoples Phone British ice dance championship. What do you think of that, Justin? "Our first reaction was disappointment," Lanning said with commendable frankness.

Of course, he went on to say all the right things about it being good for British skating and great experience for them. "We're going to do all we can to stop them taking the title from us," and all that.

But unless they make a sudden rule change to allow opponents to tackle, it seemed, from the moment the first compulsory dance was danced, that there were two events taking place at Sheffield.

field — a tough competition for second place, and a serious solo effort from T and D, out on their own in search of lost time and past perfection.

The compulsory dances are a strange, near surreal experience. We began with the Starlight Waltz, endlessly re-created music, while a couple from Altrincham and Basingstoke and Streatham glide and slide about the white expanse of Sheffield Arena.

An arena with a few hundred people in it, a spooky barn of a place, while the prides of Slough, Altrincham etcetera waltzed their guts out for 3.8s and 4.2s. A grisly business, rather like doing your A levels in a refrigerator. Admire the toughness of these people: this is a sport, and that means by it is by definition heart-breaking.

A levels are all very well if you are IT. But one of the great compensations of on-

rushing middle age is that, no matter how bad life gets, one will not have to take A levels again.

So here come Torvill and Dean, aged 36 and 35 and very much *ne mezz'et* *convinca*: seizing their chance once more to do their A levels — to skate the Starlight Waltz, while judges look at the edges and deduct marks for imperceptible imprecisions. Why bother?

T and D regularly perform ice shows to houses packed to the rafters with uncritical admirers. They have had ten years of artistic freedom. They have chosen to swap the fruits of a lifetime's work for the fret and grief of the long and cold examination room of Sheffield.

The point is that T and D were competitors before they were artists. The urge to beat people has resurfaced. They want to taste again the terror

of competition, the endless pain of preparation, the short, eternal agonies before the marks appear. There is no doubt about it — that man who in 1984 wore a purple blouse and rolled about on the ice in agonies of love, is as much eaten up with competitiveness as anyone who ever donned shin pads.

Torvill and Dean have swapped freedom for restriction. They have exchanged artistic control to be censored, cribbed and confined by rules. Ice dancing has suffered from the eternal is-it-sport-is-art dilemma. Torvill and Dean were barrier-busters. They pushed back the frontiers of ice dancing and transformed it. And in doing so, they pushed to something perilously close to nonsense. T and D dying on the ice is one thing, but most people can't do it without looking silly.

In fact, ice dance was getting alarmingly similar to the Monty Python Hospital for Overacting. So they changed the rules, went back to basics, back to dance — no more kneeling, no more lying down, no more deaths and a complete ban on suicide pacts, particularly those that involve flinging yourself into the center of a volcano.

Instead of artistic imagination, T and D must show technical virtuosity. No longer will the art conceals the art, artfulness and virtuosity must be flaunted. The challenge of a million restrictions are different from those of a limitless canvas. Torvill and Dean have sought re-inspiration from the draconian rules of competitive ice dancing. That, and the quest, not for artistic achievement, but for sporting victory.

Kerrigan forced out

NANCY Kerrigan has pulled out of the United States skating championships in Detroit because of injuries caused to her right leg when she was attacked by an unknown assailant wielding a metal bar. But American Olympic officials said Kerrigan could still be considered for the team for the Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer next month if her injuries were not too serious.

Kerrigan, the defending national champion, was leaving a

practice session on Thursday when the attack took place. Doctors said no bones were broken but severe bruising made it unwise for Kerrigan to continue in the competition.

The former Olympic gold medal-winner and world champion Brian Boitano, a professional for five years, gained a place at Lillehammer by finishing second in the men's competition behind Scott Davis.

Terror attack, page 10

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FRANCES BISSELL

From Seville
with zest

Cooking with oranges, page 5



PAUL HEINEY

Clothed in
glory

Farmer's diary, page 16



WHAT TO WEAR

The year of
brighter brides

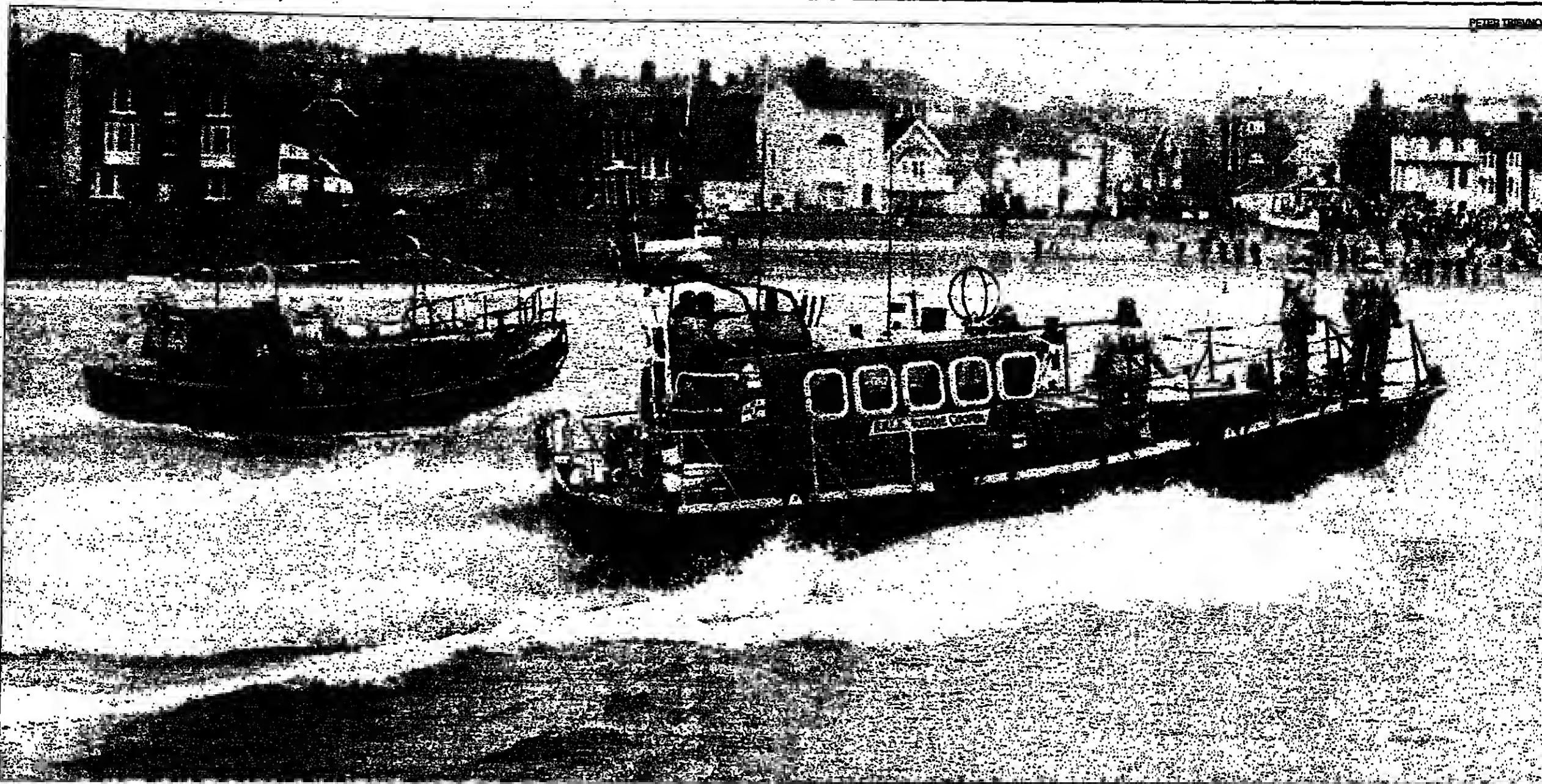
Dresses with attitude, page 9

**TAKI'S
VICES AND
VIRTUES**
Page 10

WEEKEND

3

THE TIMES SATURDAY JANUARY 8 1994



A moment of maritime history as the newer, faster Freddie Cooper dashes past the old Rother class James Cable, last of the classic, double-ended lifeboats of our Royal National Lifeboat Institution — the envy of the world

We shall all be there this weekend, yachtsmen and small-boat buffs, milling around in the shiny dreamworld of Earl's Court and inhaling the smells of new rope and teak oil. Some will be hovering deliciously on the verge of buying a first boat; others proudly trading up from outboard to speedboat, or cramped sailing butternut to deep-sea ocean-going yacht. We shall buy our boats little treats: shiny snapshackles, fender-socks, and Breton plotters and electronic marvels in a few square inches of grey plastic. It will be warm in the big halls, dry and solid underfoot and about as far as you can get from salt water. Even while actually buying lifejackets, we shall not believe that anything dreadful could ever happen.

This year, however, I shall be soberer, and stop longer than usual in front of the modest stall of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. For the real sea, the eternally cold and cruel path, has not had as many weeks as usual to fade from my memory. At five-thirty on a raw morning at the turn of December I had the luck to share a moment of maritime history: cold, damp, rough and real. I set out as the only outsider on the last mission carried out in British waters by a classic double-ended lifeboat.

You know the look of these lifeboats: like children's pictures or RNLI badges, with their handropes along the side in white festoons. They are low, sturdy, and the same shape bow and stern: they owe their lines to an 18th-century design, double-ended so that the boat could be rowed backward as well as forward without turning broadside to dangerous waves. Until very recently, despite engines and self-righting and modern electronics, most smaller and beach-launched lifeboats were of this Rother class: still visibly kin to the dogged,

sturdy craft that earlier crews sailed and rowed and hauled up the beach with cart-horses.

But since 1986, the Institution has been gradually replacing them all with something spectacularly different: fast lifeboats of the 12m Mersey class. The most ignorant eye could not fail to spot the difference: on the one hand, a stocky, low-slung, dogged wooden shape from the past, a displacement hull pushing the water aside at eight knots. On the other, something looking more like a fast modern motorboat, of tough fibre-reinforced composite, flat at the stern and high in the pointed bow, a semi-planing hull capable of scudding over the crests at 17 knots towards a rescue and rushing the survivors home. To see a Mersey glide contemptuously past a wallowing, wave-busting old Rother at double her speed is like seeing a jet pass an old prop-driven aeroplane: you may be momentarily sad, but you have to see the point. And the RNLI, which has seen its call-outs rise from 500 a year to 5,000 in recent decades with the leisure boating boom, is unsentimental. It experimented with steam as early as 1890; with motor-boats in 1904.

So station by station, the fast boats have moved in. This last day of November saw a small ceremony in Aldeburgh, when Lt-Com. Brian Miles, director of the RNLI, landed from the new lifeboat Freddie Cooper and placed the final piece in a symbolic jigsaw of the coastline. A silent crowd watched from the beach as the Freddie dashed past the James Cable, only 11 years older herself

but one of the last wooden boats, and the very last double-ended. The Cable has done her bit: searched through gales, taken sick crewmen off ships in all weathers, towed casualties home, saved lives. This was goodbye. The sole reminder of the wooden boats will be the collecting boxes and badges which will remain unchanged, an enduring symbol of this British Institution. I have a long affection for the RNLI: in a world of squabbling public inefficiency, of taxes raised and dismantled at vast cost and squandered on fripperies, it is an inspiration. It takes no government money and yet prospers: a piece of pure democracy, existing merely because the people of an island nation agree wholeheartedly that it should. The tin in the street, the raffle, the volunteer shop, the clause in the will, the fund-raising hops and lifeboat balls give it more than £50 million a year. Our lifeboat service is the envy of the world, not because any government has willed it, but because we have. And because volunteer lifeboatmen and women still come forward to man it.

So I wanted to be there at this crux of its history. Before dawn the James Cable chugged out for the last time from its temporary mooring on the River Alde, to rendezvous with the new boat. Shivering on the shingle with half the crew, I watched her manoeuvre towards us. Stiff with lifejackets, we clambered from the dinghy into the draughty, comfortless, half-open cuddy. An oath was heard faintly through the darkness as the young-gest lifeboatman vanished up the



Libby Purves
salutes the heroism
of our lifeboat
crews, marked at
the RNLI's Boat
Show stand

with the dinghy. "Lost the — oar!" And so the Cable carried out her final rescue, picking him up. "He'll have a bad time on rubber duck laying-up night," said the staff coxswain, John Marjoram. "When we lay up the inshore lifeboat, we set penalties for anyone who's been a bit silly in the year. We'll think of something he can do with an oar." Downriver in the darkness and the rain, the men exchanged anecdotes of the service. "He veered the lifeboat off to avoid the ship's roll, she came broadside, went over, he was lost. Could have been anyone."

John Marjoram peered at the echo-sounder, observing that it was dead low water on the wicked Alde bar. Rough seas lifted us at the shallowest part, and we hit the bottom with a terrible grating, sprang forward and bounced again in the boiling brown muddy water. Streaks of foam blown from the waves marbled the nastiness around us: it was the kind of scene which in a yacht would make you think of lifeboats. It was a small shock to realise that I was on one, and that these cheerful lads in their spartan boat were the last resort for the unlucky and the foolhardy. Not that lifeboatmen often *exceed* foolhardiness. "Could happen to anyone. Your luck just runs out." Not all of them are fishermen these days: some work for BT, for the Sizewell reactor stations, or behind counters. But they all know the sea, and how your luck can run out.

Mr Marjoram gave me the wheel, and I drove the last double-ended, rolling and plunging towards Orford Ness. Above my head a notice said "WEAR PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR". George the mechanic was in a flat, rowed hat, John in a sort of Russian army leftover, most of the others in plain curly hair. But as we got close enough for photographs, they solemnly donned the official, orange hard-topped RNLI issue. "Prat-hats," they said resignedly. A sense of occasion came over us all: we were to meet and lead home the new fast lifeboat.

Then up stormed the Freddie Cooper, and a group of us swapped boats, climbing awkwardly from rail to rail and into another world.

After the draughty, cramped standing-room of the Cable we were in a modern cabin with harnessed padded seats for each crewman. We left the old James Cable behind in our wash, circled triumphantly and hit the beach neatly in place to be towed up over the shingle to the new lifeboathouse. Everything changes, except the sea itself.

I went home with A Lifeboatman's Days by the original James Cable, who served as Aldeburgh coxswain from 1880 to the torpedo-rescues of the First

World War. I read of his dark mornings, "blowing and snowing" in the 1890s, and thought of the hissing, bumping bar of a few hours back. And I read of December 7, 1899, when with a bitter onshore wind, the maroons went off. James Cable wrote:

"I was suffering from influenza but when I heard the rockets fired I got up and went. I was just having my lifebelt strapped on when my doctor came and forbade me to go..." The lifeboat turned over a hundred yards from shore, and he saw six men drowned. When a new lifeboat arrived, "I was afraid after the accident that we should have some trouble getting a crew; but I was wrong". A crew came forward, including his own son, and the service went on. It still does: faster, safer, but the same. Salute it.

For those in peril

Pretty as a picture, and just as dead

Peter Barnard says townies are killing village life

I would not go so far as to trouble the editor of the *Guinness Book of Records* but I would lay claim to living 100 feet from the smallest newsagents in Britain. It consists of a rusty former breadbin which sits on a verge in my hamlet and which, every morning, is filled with newspapers.

The system works, so far as it goes, but a breadbin is not a focus for the distillation of gossip, the purchasing of sweets or the advertising of cats and baby-sitters. A breadbin, in short, is not a shop.

Between them, the five hamlets which sail under the flag of my district council have one post office-cum-trunk shop, one garage, three pubs, one tearoom and a battery chicken farm. Therefore we are pretty thin on trade, though some readers in similarly sparse parts of the country will wish they could be so lucky.

In every issue of *Dalton's Weekly* a thousand dreams of self-employed country living are offered up in the shape of pubs, newsagents, grocers, garages and the like. There is a reason why so many such businesses are for sale, and the reason is that the very people who are perceived to be saving the countryside are contributing to its demise.

We are asked to believe that farmer townies are the saviours of the country, selling their slate portfolios and moving into thatched cottages, thus rejuvenating the rural economy. There are a few pockets where this may be true, but mostly it is anything but. Take, for example, that vexed and commonplace thing called getting the car fixed.

Getting my car fixed involves



driving it less than a mile to the aforementioned garage, which is so obliging that last summer when the car broke down on holiday the garage sent a mechanic 130 miles to south Devon with a spare car, and did not charge for it.

Twenty-five years ago, the present owner employed seven mechanics. Now he employs two. The reason is not Japanese reliability but British inflexibility: the new ruralites think nothing of

having their cars fixed at a main agent up to 20 miles away, seemingly convinced that gleaming forecourts imply greater sophistication in matters mechanical.

As with car repairs, so with shopping. The nearest village with a proper shop, a mini-market, is one mile from my house. The nearest out-of-town supermarket is a Sainsbury's, nine miles away. Townie theory holds that one cannot possibly go to the local shop because it is too expensive.

This week a sample list of 20 essential items, including food and household necessities such as washing-up liquid, cost £15.60 at the local shop and £12.76 at Sainsbury's. This may be a considerable saving for pensioners, if they can get there, but it repre-

sents peanuts to most middle-class incomes. Especially so when you add the cost of petrol, at least £1 for the 18-mile round trip.

The fact is that too many of the people now populating our villages have a lot to learn about putting back what they take out. Incomers will sign petitions to save rural sub-post offices but they are damned if they will set foot in one. The rural environment was not designed to be a dead backwater useful only for picture postcards, but a living stream of activity. Yet now there are thousands of villages which are no more than quaint housing estates.

Blaming the Government, as has happened over sub-post office closures, is not good enough. The solution to rural decay lies with the inhabitants of rural areas. They — or rather, we — are killing the countryside with supercilious neglect.

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JAN 10 1994



Peter Dixon risks his neck skiing off-piste in the Alps, and his waistline indulging in luxury



With a lifetime of climbing and skiing behind him, M. Oliani comes straight out of the top drawer. Tanned and craggy, laid-back and serious, he has the knack of teaching

the top of the Aiguille du Midi, the last 150 yards up a sheer rock face, those who plan to ski back to the bottom (as opposed to those who have come along for the ride and the view) are greeted by the sight of a snake of fellow adventurers edging their way precariously down a steep ridge to the start of the run. The ridge, in parts no more than 6ft wide, has what seems like a sheer drop on either side. Roped together, and planting skis like poles to prevent sliding, the skiers need every ounce of concentration.

After a hunch halfway down at a marvellous, remote mountain retreat, the end of the day proved no less invigorating than the start, with an extraor-

● Peter Dixon was a guest of The Ski Company. Bookings can be made through Abercrombie & Kent, (071-730 9600). Prices per person at The Villa Terrier range from £885 in low season to £1,107 in high season, including flights and transfers, with a £400 supplement for single occupancy. A 10 per cent discount is offered to parties booking the whole chalet.

● **Relaxation Breaks at the Flackley Ash Hotel, Peasmarsh, near Rye, East Sussex TN31 6YH (0197 230651) cost £165 per person sharing a twin/double room and English breakfast. A separate Beauty Break including shampoo and set/wash and blow-dry plus facial costs £22.50 when booked with accommodation.**

According to health experts, it is the anti-gravity aspect of floating that accounts for its benefits. This is supposedly because the brain cells normally engaged in muscular activity are liberated through weightlessness producing slower brain-wave patterns — the sort experienced during deep meditation or just before falling asleep.

I had thought that a two-night stay would provide plenty of time to try everything on offer, but it was surprising how full the schedule seemed to be. With an hour's full body massage, two half-hour solari-
um sessions, two separate hours in the flotation tank and a wash and blow-dry with the hairdresser, I barely found time to read the weekend newspapers.

Florida Disney and from

There was
nothing to
hear except
my own
breathing

After a hectic relaxation programme during the day, I escaped to my comfortable, well-decorated room with *en suite* bathroom to change for dinner in the restaurant, where I enjoyed local brill and a good Australian chardonnay.

It says much for the hotel and the Bennetts' friendly welcome that, on any weekend, about a fifth of their guests have stayed there before. Regular boarders include a BBC newsreader, and a schoolteacher who said that she did not feel like hitting a pupil for a fortnight, such was the sense of well-being engendered by the experience.

Like her, I enjoyed my

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— 24 —

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TAKE A THOMAS
EASIER WAY ON
YOUR SUMMER

GUARANTEED

James MacManus finds it happily difficult to leave the good life in Barbados



Bougainvillea, fringed palms and a warm blue sea grace the sandy beach of the luxurious Royal Pavilion hotel

Ideal place to keep Concorde waiting

Concorde sat on the runway shimmering through the haze like an exotic stick insect, while halfway across the island the passenger delaying flight BA272 from Barbados to London stood at the hotel reception desk trying to keep a grip on his crumbling composure.

On the far side of the desk, staff were drilling into the hotel safe. My passport and tickets were in the safe. The hotel had lost the key. No passport, no flight to London. The young woman from the travel agency looked close to tears. I told her, soothingly, that I would take the next Concorde flight. Her legs buckled and she sat down with a sob. The next flight was in a week's time, she wailed.

Leaving the realm of safe-crackers to their mission impossible (it was a very, solid, safe), I strolled into the hotel garden. The ringed trunks of the royal palms rose 120ft to brilliant green crowns over clipped tiger grass lawns. Flamboyant shrubs and mango trees jostled with the rarer African tulip trees, Spanish oaks and Bohemian orchids. Humming birds hovered and hummed around the richly flowered cherry trees, and the occasional uniformed gardener trailed around with a watering can. Who needs a beach when you can sit under a mahogany tree with a book and a rum punch and watch that kind of show?

These carefully designed tropical gardens, spilling on to half a mile of beach, provide the setting for the Royal Pavilion and its sister hotel next door, the Glitter Bay. These are two of the four or five world-class beach hotels on Barbados. Because such hotels offer high standards of service and food in elegant surroundings, Barbados has regained its position as the number one tourist destination in the Caribbean. But the market is highly competitive. Tourists paying up to £2,000 each for a week's winter holiday in the West Indies will no longer be bought off with the old lures of sun, rum and warm blue seas. They want, and will pay for, excellence.

The Royal Pavilion aims to capture this market. Its spacious rooms rise in three decks from the shore and every room faces the sea. With its washed-pink stucco walls and arched ceilings, the hotel looks different enough to be interesting but not oppressively stylish. The Glitter Bay is more relaxed, better suited to families with children. With three restaurants between the two hotels, guests at either can lunch or dine, where they wish, switching from lighter American cuisine to pasta and pizzas and then to the grander fare prepared at the Royal Pavilion's main restaurant, by a former chef at Le Gavroche.

Both hotels are on the smart, west side of the island, a world away from the strip of

cheaper hotels and rented apartments on the south side. The Atlantic coast to the east is different again, with a wild and relatively undeveloped shoreline much favoured by the Bajans, who traditionally shun the humid western side.

Only 21 miles long and 14 wide, the island packs plenty of diversity and no small measure of paradox into its 166 square miles. The British colonial period ended in 1966 but is still remembered, without rancour and occasionally with warmth, among the older generation of the 250,000 population. I was told with pride that the statue of Nelson in the capital, Bridgetown, had been erected 30 years before the one in Trafalgar Square.

This old-fashioned side of Barbados, seen against the backdrop of a rich and carefully preserved colonial architecture of plantation houses, sugar mills and churches, has encouraged some to view the island as a throwback to the Britain of 60 years ago. It is no such thing. It has its problem of crime and drugs among a restless young population but the island is stable, with decent public services and a vigorous press.

Where Barbados scores over its rivals is that, with its restaurants, rum shops and handful of beachfront nightclubs, it offers a more sophisticated holiday to those who want to venture out of their

hotel when the sun goes down. Taxis are cheap and £6 will take you from a west coast hotel to the capital. Car hire is recommended at about £125 a week for those who want to plunge into the colonial past or take a trip to the east-coast Atlantis Hotel, which is famous for its local cuisine.

Most importantly, the food, based on fish, fruit and local chicken, is claimed to be the best in the Caribbean. If you stay in the palladian splendour of The Sandy Lane Hotel, the Royal Pavilion, the relaxed and rather special Glitter Bay or the smaller but charming Cobblers Cove, you will eat well. But you will also do so at a number of local restaurants listed below. Wines from France and America are available, and expensive, but the locally brewed Banks beer and the rum are excellent.

A shout of triumph from the Royal Pavilion reception desk broke my Bajan reverie. The safe had been cracked. I scrambled on to Concorde to hear the captain apologising to passengers for offering only a Chateau Talbot 1978 by way of a chart from the plane's cellars. It's that kind of plane: it took just three and a half hours to whizz from the cloudless skies of the West Indies to the cold mackerel skies of London.

Today in the Magazine, a 26-page travel special, including Michael Watkins on the Caribbean.



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Getting there

James MacManus travelled courtesy of Caribours (071-581 3577) and British Airways. There are big seasonal variations in the prices of holidays on Barbados. Winter rates, from January 1 to April 2, are the most expensive; prices drop from mid-April to mid-July, when they rise again because of the school holidays in Britain.

Weather varies little between low and high season, with temperatures of about 80F and little rain until September.

Getting there: Caribours offers a double room at the Glitter Bay, including BA flight, half board and waterports, for £1,033 a person a week low season to £1,765 high season. A similar deal at the Royal Pavilion costs £1,132 low season, £2,039 high.

In conjunction with BA, Caribours offers free connections from domestic UK airports, and special upgrades to Club World (from £200), first class (from £1,213) and Concorde supplements for weekly departures in winter from £1,025.

Where to eat: The Mews, Hoielown, West coast: informal, popular with locals and tourists. European cooking. From £15 a head. The Carambola, Derricks, St James: superb beachside restaurant. £25 a head. The Bagatelle Great House, inland from the St James coast: a 350-year-old house. It is one of the finest restaurants in the Caribbean and has an art gallery. £30 a head. La Cage aux Folles, Paynes Bay, St James: French and Chinese cuisine. About £25 a head. Bamboo beach bar and restaurant, Paynes Bay: great spot for lunch on the beach. Lively at night. About £12 a head.

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John 10150

A small firm in Morecambe has made a big name in the potted shrimp business. Clarissa Hyman reports

Pots of pleasure by post

Morecambe in Lancashire has three principal attractions — the Bay, Oliver Hill's neglected but striking art deco Midland Hotel, and potted shrimps. Thanks to the Baxter family, the last can be enjoyed anywhere in the country. Indeed, such is the excellence of this quintessential English savoury, that for about 30 years

They can get through an astonishing million and a half shrimps in a year



discreet little packages have been delivered to the most distinguished doorsteps in the land. Bob Baxter's late father obtained Royal Warrants as purveyor of potted shrimps to the Queen and the Queen Mother, and the company is proud of the pedigree.

Ever since the Baxters started dealing in shrimps in Morecambe in the late 1970s, the fortunes of the resort have ebbed and flowed along with the estuarial tides. Some things, however, remain constant. As Mr Baxter says: "We might have a kitchen full of stainless steel now, instead of wood, but the process and the shrimps are unchanged. It will never be a mass market, though, as there is a limit to supplies, and it is also highly labour intensive."

Nonetheless, there will always be a place for potted shrimps in the roll call of classic British food. One woman recently wrote to Mr Baxter, delighted to find his shrimps still as good as those she remembered eating in 1928.

The turnover of his postal trade is now £200,000 a year. A minimum size pack of nine 2oz pots of shrimps in the post costs £18.95. Mr Baxter's grandmother, a formidable woman

from Southport, was the pioneer in potted shrimps commercially in the town. The family used to have its own fleet of boats, and then expanded the business to run fresh-fish shops and a chain of restaurants. At one time, the company also made shrimp and lobster paste, but now it concentrates on its business in potted shrimps and a small frozen-food centre.

A potted shrimp is a diminutive brown scudger found in sandy waters in a sweep from the Solway to the Dee. Mr Baxter obtains his supplies from half a dozen full-time fishermen trawling from 30ft smacks. The shrimps are sorted, cleaned and boiled on board in sea water as soon as they are caught. Thankfully, a European Commission threat to this traditional practice was given short shrift last year. Mr Baxter says: "They were trying to mend a bucket that wasn't broken."

After the catch is landed, the families of the fishermen peel or "pick" the shrimps with their fingers at high speed. When they shell sea-shells by the seashore here, they get through an astonishing million and a half in a year.

On delivery to the small Baxter factory, Doreen and Kathleen, second-generation staff with 38 years of potted shrimp experience between them, preserve the shrimps in the good, old-fashioned way. Gently stewed again in best butter and spices, the shrimps are spread out on trays to cool, then carefully turned and folded so that the juices of both shrimp and butter are evenly distributed.



Bob Baxter with his potted shrimps. His family have been dealing in shrimps since the late 18th century, for the past 30 years delivering them to the Queen.

Salted butter has always been used in the north-west, and Mr Baxter looks blank at the notion of using unsalted, or even clarified, butter. No, that is not the way they do things up there. And, as for his secret mix of spices, by heck, a herd of wild elephants would be foolish to try to drag that out of him.

After the shrimps have been chilled, the women deftly press them into the cartons, levelling them with ancient flattened spoons, before labelling a micro-thin layer of melted butter over the top. About half their output is dispatched fresh to individual mail-order customers.

The remainder is frozen for distribution to hotels, restaurants and selected retail outlets.

Mr Baxter keeps a crustacean house of horrors to demonstrate the difference between what he sees as the perfect potted shrimp and the bogus. "There's some terrible rubbish around," he says sorrowfully. "They may be cheaper, but that's not the point. Effectively, we have no competition: no-one approaches our quality on a commercial basis." To prove his point, he parades for inspection cartons in which the butter far outweighs the shrimp content, cartons with butter of a

virulent yellow colour, and cartons containing a substance which would not be hard to distinguish from butter. There were cartons that had been poorly levelled, ones with icy water on the bottom, and even one in which there were prawns pretending to be shrimps.

By comparison, Baxter's shrimps do have a tantalising appeal. Curled up coquettishly in their little white pots, like tiny kiss-curls under a cap of opaque gold, they have a sweet, juicy, slightly nutty quality. The spicing is modest, but sufficient to leave an after-taste.

Most people eat them simply

warmed through on toast, although they can be an excellent filling for baked potatoes. Mr Baxter likes to eat them as they come. "I just take them out of the fridge and fork them straight from the pot. Along with a gin and tonic, they go down very well."

• Baxter's shrimps, in either 2oz or 7oz cartons, are chilled before dispatch. They can be kept in a refrigerator for a maximum of six days, or frozen on the day of receipt. A price list and order form is available from James Baxter & Son, Thornton Road, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 5EP (0524 410910, answering machine 0524 418735, fax 0524 833663).

RESTAURANT WATCH

ALL EIGHTS

Savoy Group Restaurants
1 Savoy Hill, London
WC2 (071 240 6883)

The Eight Times Table — special "888" menus providing two-course lunches or dinners until 5pm at £8 — starts today. Upstairs at the Savoy, in the Causerie at Claridge's, the Perroquet at the Berkeley, and at Grill St. Quentin, the Brasserie St. Quentin, and Simpson's-in-the-Strand. Note: the three hotel restaurants are closed on Sundays. The offer runs until February 8, and will be revived for the whole of August.

DENNY LODGED

Summer Lodge
Evershot, Dorset
(0935 33424)

Edward Denny, for six years chef and a director of the Box Tree at Hildy, West Yorkshire, has taken up residence at the Corbets Relais & Chateaux hotel in Hardy country, where he has Shaun Smith-Roberts, formerly with Adrian Clarke at Brasted in Norfolk, as his sous-chef. Robin Young writes. His predecessor, Martin Lee, has moved on to work with Patricia Shapland at Whitechapel Manor, South Molton, in north Devon. Lunches: including coffee, £17.50 for two courses or £19.50 for three; four-course dinner £24.50; average spend a la carte £32. Open for non-residents 12.30 to 1.30pm and 7.30 to 9pm, seven days a week. There are also breaks available from £25 for a couple for two days at the weekend, or £375 for three days midweek.

NEW HABITAT

The King's Road
Café
Habitat, 208 King's Road, London SW3
(071 351 1211)

The café in the redesigned Habitat store has a special menu of "authentic regional Italian cuisine" created by an Amalfitan-former photographer, Piero Amadio, and his Italian team. Specialities include roasted peppers with rucola and balsamic vinegar and smoked mozzarella in carrots. The menu changes daily. Seats 70. Open seven days a week: 10am to 6pm (5pm on Sundays).

Jonathan Meades, The Times Magazine, page 29

Higher prices, wider horizons

Jane MacQuitty looks at what 1994 holds for the adventurous drinker

Wine prices in 1994, like house prices, have nowhere to go but up. And after at least three years of price cutting on everything from the finest French vintages to the lowliest £1.99 table wine, drinkers can hardly be surprised.

Fortunately, what will not change is the extraordinarily wide range of wine on sale here. New arrivals in 1993 included Hugh Ryan's astonishingly good £2.99 chardonnay from Moldova, as well as Safeway's thrilling, vibrant, beautiful method "young vinted" reds from Bulgaria and Spain. And we can expect similar surprises in 1994.

So what should the discerning, cost-conscious wine drinker be buying in 1994 and where is it likely to come from? France will feature in the frame but not, it seems, the classic regions' wines. Bordeaux and Burgundy have improved in quality over the past 20 years and are hard to beat at the top end. But if you are after the best value and you only have a five or less to spend, do not bother with these two. Northern French wine-producing areas including Alsace and the Loire are unlikely to bring your taste buds much joy at this price level either. And of

course, you will need twice as much money to buy anything decent from Champagne.

The Gallic great white hope continues to be the south and southwest, whose beneficial Mediterranean climate and the arrival of new money and trained wine makers give the area plenty of potential.

Outside southern France, the hot wine tip for 1994 continues to be eastern Europe, the more so now that state monopolies are no more and private enterprise and competition are on the increase. Not so long ago Hungary's big thing was dreary

Bull's Blood and ancient tokay. Since the 1991 vintage, Hugh Ryan's good Gyöngös sauvignon and chardonnay have revealed the country's true wine-making potential and shown the way forward. Bulgaria, too, has advanced a step with its young vinted cabernet and merlot.

Other bright spots in what was the eastern bloc include Moldova's chardonnay, and at some stage other newly independent eastern states, especially Georgia, traditionally the source of the finest Russian wine, should start to show their true colours.

BEST BUYS FOR 1994

- South and southwest France, especially wines with the Vin de Pays d'Oc and Coteaux du Languedoc appellations.
- New-wave eastern European wines, such as Bulgaria's young vinted cabernet, exclusive to Safeway. Hungary's Gyöngös sauvignon and Moldova's chardonnay.
- Portuguese whites and reds.
- Almost any Australian wine from £2.99 to £10.99.
- New Zealand whites, particularly sauvignon at £3 to £7.
- South African white wines in the £2.99 to £5 bracket.
- Selected other New World wines, including Fetzer and Strayford from California amongst other wineries and Chilean sauvignon and cabernet.

Western Europe's dark horse continues to be Portugal, home to a wealth of excellent, indigenous grape varieties and great wines such as port, but somehow not quite there yet in the fine-wine stakes. However, trained foreign wine-makers and high-tech equipment are beginning to produce the right bottles there.

Outside Europe, wine-producing countries in the New World are again the ones to watch in 1994. Australia is still king of the New World bargain bottle, with lots of great buys at every price. Neighbouring New Zealand is catching up fast, especially with vital, racy white wines made from the sauvignon grape and others. Now that sanctions have been lifted, South Africa is worth watching.

California continues to enjoy some success here but its prices are still too high, with the honourable exceptions of Fetzer and Strayford. Look out too for better South American wines: while not in the big league yet, good, ordinary Chilean sauvignon and cabernet have arrived.

Jonathan Meades on beer, The Times Magazine, page 26



Wine lovers have never enjoyed such wide variety as today

Have a nice eating day

California is the state of excess, and good food is no exception

Not surprisingly, more comprehensive local production is having a significant effect on the sales of European specialities. Imported status is no longer so chic, and many consumers are buying the Californian equivalent instead. Californian olive oil is said to be fruitier and more intensely flavoured than Italian, while the choice includes oil from single olive varieties, as well as early and late harvest styles.

"Many people have looked at imports and thought, we

can do that," says Bob Hurley, chef at the California Café in Yountville, Napa. He adds: "I think we've come past the point of looking to Europe for influences. Just as with our wines, we're doing our own thing." Doing their own thing, California-style, also means utilising their own heritage. "The psychology of the Nineties is a return to basics that are rooted in tradition," says John Nash, the chef at Fetzer Vineyards in Mendocino.

One result is that "granny cooking" (the type of inexpen-

sive dishes traditionally served to working people in diners) has been brought out of retirement. Meatloaf, probably the best known example, is so passé that it's actually rather avant-garde when a lighter, more vegetarian version is served up in chic San Francisco restaurants.

Similarly, Latin and Asian flavours are used to "contemporise" pot roast, while mashed potato is another hit item, flavoured perhaps with goats' cheese and garlic.

Grannies have always been strong on puddings, but I wonder what they would think of using lemon grass and coconut milk to refresh a traditional rice pudding, or indeed, of giving the dish more spirit by adding golden raisins marinated in Russian vodka.

These "highly palatable twists" mean that Californian cuisine is always in the fast lane. One dessert that took me

by surprise was a plate of fresh strawberries, figs and melon, attractively decorated with red and green speckles. My first mouthful proved to be hot stuff. The speckles were fresh chilli.

Trends in California also inspire many renowned chefs in Britain. Lorna Wing, one of London's most innovative caterers, says: "We're influenced by Californian cuisine more than anything else. They take ethnic cuisine so much better than we do, as they're not afraid to mix." Willi Elsener, executive chef at The Dorchester, adds: "Being light and nutritious, Californian cuisine adapts very well to today's lifestyle."

IAN WISNIEWSKI

• Recipes for home cooks can be found in Fog City Diner Cookbook by Cindy Pawlson, based on dishes served in the gourmet San Francisco restaurants. It has just arrived at Books for Cooks (071-221 1992, price £15.99).

DISH OF THE DAY



Chef: Steven Saunders, 32.
Born: Ipswich, Suffolk.
Restaurant: Pink Geranium, Station Road, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire (0763 260215). Fixed price lunch £17.95 (£18.95 Sunday); dinner £29.95.

Present: In addition to running the Pink Geranium with eight chefs, he writes a recipe column in Caterer & Hotelkeeper, and does radio and television cookery broadcasts. His book Only the Best (Little, Brown £10.99) is devoted to children's food.

Past: Started in hotels in and around Ipswich, then trained at the Savoy and by taking holiday jobs at Michelin-starred restaurants in France. Ran the White Hart at Great Yeldham, Essex, for six years before buying the Pink Geranium in 1987.

Future: Will soon be appearing on Anglia Television's The Food Guide teaching children how to cook.

Personal: "I play squash and tennis, swim, and spend a lot of time at the gym."

Dish: Loin of lamb with a celeriac and potato rösti and a layered gâteau of provencal vegetables, £21.95.

ROBIN YOUNG

Oranges with appeal

Frances Bissell suggests tangy new-season dishes and her own recipe for marmalade



The TIMES COOK

The Seville oranges will be in the shops soon, and I use this lovely, sharp fruit in as many ways as possible. This time last year I was in Jerez and the orange trees in the streets were laden with fruit. The oranges belong to the council and I was told that a contractor had been called in to pick them and sell them to Britain's marmalade makers. Lack of rain meant that the oranges were small but, to me, their size indicated that, though not very juicy, the flavour would be concentrated. I scurried some and within a day of returning to London I had made a small batch of bright, tangy marmalade. The rest of the oranges I used in other dishes.

First I peeled off long, thin strips of zest, put them in a decanter, and filled it up with a cream sherry. I rubbed a sugar lump over the orange to take up the rest of the fragrant essential oils and added it to the decanter, together with a splash of Iberian brandy. The idea is to leave this *vinho aromatizado con naranja* for several weeks, and then serve it in small glasses as a digestif. I also find it good in cooking, just a dash used in a duck casserole makes all the dif-

ference. One of the joys of Seville oranges is that they are not sprayed with chemicals, but this means their shelf-life is relatively short.

The juice of the Seville orange can also be used in fish cookery, such as roasted skate with Seville oranges, and scallops and red mullet with orange sauce, and it is particularly good with mackerel and other oily fish.

José Antonio Valdespino, at the restaurant La Mesa Redonda in Jerez, serves thin slices of tuna marinated in a little sherry vinegar with extra virgin olive oil. Try this variation from my kitchen.

Orange marinated tuna fish (serves 4-6)

1lb/455g trimmed fillet of tuna fish
extra virgin olive oil
sea salt

freshly ground black pepper
1 or 2 Seville oranges, juice only (use the rest in another dish)

fresh dill, chives or flat-leaf parsley

Slice the tuna fish as thinly as possible, firming it up in the freezer helps. Brush each slice with oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Leave for up to three hours, covered in the refrigerator. Just before serving, brush with orange juice. Decorate with herbs and serve.

PHEASANTS, particularly the hens, are large and plump at the end of the season. Even though they have, by this time, accumulated more fat than early in the season and can thus be roasted without barding, I still prefer to pot-roast them, preferably on a bed of onions, garlic and root vegetables, which caramelize nicely. The bitter-sweet juice of the Seville orange replaces the more usual lemon. Chicken and guinea fowl also respond well to this treatment.

Before roasting, a duck, pick it all over, and rub with the juice of a Seville orange, tucking some of the zest inside the body cavity. Peel the veg-



Pot-roast pheasant with Seville orange (serves 4)

1 large hen pheasant

1 Seville orange

salt, pepper

4 bay leaves

parsley stalks

1/2 lb/230g parsnips

1/2 lb/230g carrots

1/2 lb/230g celeriac

1/2 lb/230g turnips

1oz/30g butter, or 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2tbsp Spanish brandy

4tbsp dry Amontillado or Oloroso sherry

Trim off any feathers and excess fat from the bird. Peel the rest from the orange, putting half of it in the cavity and reserving the rest for another purpose. Halve the orange, discard the seeds and squeeze out the juice. Rub the bird all over with the juice, season it, and put the bay leaves and parsley stalks inside the cavity. Peel the veg-

etables and cut into even-size pieces, about the size of a cork. Heat the butter or oil and fry the vegetables all over. Transfer them to a casserole, and then brown the bird all over, and place it on top of the vegetables. Pour the brandy over the bird, and standing well back, light it. Deglaze the frying pan with sherry and a little water or stock, and pour the juices over the bird. Cover and cook in a pre-heated oven at 180C/350F, gas mark 4 for about an hour.

Joint the bird, and serve it with the vegetables. Strain the juice into a jug, and serve separately. It can be enriched with cream if you like. Watercress or flat-leaf parsley will brighten up the dish, as will a few wedges of orange.

Now for the marmalade: I make no claims for this being the best, easiest or most economical recipe, but it works for me, and makes just the right quantity - a few jars ranging in size from yoghurt

jars to jam jars, some for me, some for friends. I am not interested in making as much marmalade from as few oranges as possible.

Seville orange marmalade (makes about 4lb/1.80kg)
6-8 Seville oranges
2pt/680ml water
about 3 1/2 lb/1.70kg granulated sugar

Scrub the oranges well, rinse, and put in a lidded saucepan with the water. Cook gently, covered, for two to three hours until soft. Remove from the heat and allow to cool overnight. Halve the oranges, scoop out the pulp and seeds into a sieve set over a wide pan. Rub through, and add the cooking liquid and the sugar.

Heat gently, and when the sugar has dissolved, boil for a few minutes. Meanwhile, finely slice the orange peel, or process for a few seconds in the food processor. Stir the orange into the boiling sugar

syrup. Continue cooking just until the marmalade reaches setting point. Allow to stand for five minutes to distribute the peel evenly. Fill small hot, clean jars right to the top. Cover with waxed discs and Cellophane covers, label and store when cool.

There is invariably a little marmalade left over. Serve it hot over vanilla ice-cream, use it to flavour a home-made ice-cream, or stir it into a freshly made rice pudding.

RICH orange curd is rather time-consuming to make and is something of a luxury. It is tempting to make it in large batches, on the principle that as it takes so long to make, it is worth making plenty of it: it is a temptation to be resisted unless you plan to give lots away or use some of it immediately in Seville orange ice-cream. The reason for this is that the curd does not keep: no more than four weeks, preferably less. As it contains

raw eggs, it should be kept in the refrigerator. Do not let this put you off making it. Seville oranges are such a treat that they deserve exploiting. I put my curd in 100g jars. I'm afraid, fill no more than four. Lemons and limes can be prepared in the same way.

Seville orange curd (makes about 1lb/455g; this recipe uses raw eggs)

3 Seville oranges, two if large

6oz/170g caster sugar and 2 or 3 sugar lumps

3 1/2 oz/100g unsalted butter, cut into pieces

3 free-range eggs, well beaten and sieved

Grate the zest from the oranges, and put to one side. Rub the sugar lumps over the orange to extract the rest of the oil and flavour, and put in a bowl set over hot water, together with the rest of the sugar. Halve the oranges and squeeze the juice into the sugar. Add the pieces of butter,

and stir until the sugar has almost dissolved and you have a uniform mixture. Gradually beat in the eggs, and continue to cook over hot water until the mixture thickens. This will take anything up to 40 minutes. The process should not be hurried, as you risk curdling. After about 25 minutes, stir in the orange zest. I do not like to add it earlier as it takes on a somewhat marmalade quality from long cooking, and I like to preserve the sharp, fresh flavour of the bitter orange.

The mixture should lightly coat the back of a spoon before you remove it from the heat. Do not worry if it looks pourable rather than spreadable. The mixture thickens as it cools. Pour into small, clean jars, allow to cool slightly, then seal, label and refrigerate. You can use the curd to make a number of easy, yet delicious chilled or iced puddings, such as soufflés, par-faits, and ice-creams.

Spirited kick-start to the day

Grappa is a potent drink enjoyed all over the world, yet its Italian origins are humble

Several highly alcoholic drinks produced in northern Italy help those who live there through the cold, raw winters. The added excuse for their popularity is that the kick will aid the digestion of the delicious but heavy food of the region. But no drink is finer than grappa, whether taken in a bar as an early morning starter or as a flavoured digestivo at the end of the day.

Grappa is the pure, clear, potent spirit distilled from the fermented remains of grapes after pressing, and the Nardini family is one of the oldest producers, going back seven generations. Today, Giuseppe, Cristina and Angelo Nardini sell four million litres of grappa a year, accounting, they say, for 20 per cent of the market.

The business remains centred in the mountain town of Bassano del Grappa, perched on the edge of the Dolomites. It operates out of a small *grapperia*, the Bottega Nardini, which sits on the famous wooden Ponte degli Alpini, designed by Andrea Palladio, spanning the Brenta river.

Here Bortolo Nardini started distilling and selling his grappa in 1779. The design of the bottle and the label have remained the same since that time and, says Giuseppe Nardini, so has the quality of the grappa.

The bar has survived a fire on the bridge, and bombs aimed at destroying the bridge during the First World War. The shelves are lined with ancient metal urns and pewter serving jugs. Customers sit on the blackened wooden benches to savour the velvety liquid. Don't bother to ask for anything else, only grappa is served here.

Sitting in his office behind the busy bar, Signor Nardini told me that sticking to the



The Bottega Nardini on the wooden Ponte degli Alpini at Bassano del Grappa, Italy

family traditions was the secret of their continuing success. "To begin with," he said, "we have never really changed our particular system of distillation, but with modern standards we have stayed loyal to the grapes grown in the surrounding Veneto region, because I believe it is this soil that gives our grappa its particular taste. We have never been tempted to buy grapes from other parts of Italy."

Another tradition is that the Nardinis never advertise their product, and have no agents to market it, yet still manage to export all over the world. Wholesalers who want to buy from the company must pay in advance, a policy not easily accepted in Italy.

The popularity of grappa is expanding, especially in Germany, America and Japan. There are many varieties of grappa-drinkers' preferences are as diverse as those of whisky-drinkers. Many producers add fruit and herb flavours, one of the most delicious being almond.

Signor Nardini says that for him "the tradition of our region is for people to buy our pure, clear grappa, and then add their own fruits at home. We make only one aromatic grappa, using *ruta* (rue), a mountain herb from the near-



Pure, clear, potent grappa

by Monte Grappa, because we have always done this."

The production of grappa is essentially simple: whereas cognac is distilled wine, grappa is made from an even more basic product - the distilled *vinaccia*, which is the pulp of

seeds and skin left over after the grapes have been pressed to make wine.

Signor Nardini says that grappa originated around Monte Grappa: in this impoverished region the farmers did not want to throw away the remains of their grapes after making the wine. The solution was to distill them.

The Nardinis buy vast quantities of *vinaccia* from local vineyards, made up of white grapes such as chardonnay, pinot and prosecco, mixed with the red *cépages* of cabernet, merlot and reboso. The grappa-making season lasts from November to April.

First, the *vinaccia* is stored in a vacuum, where it ferments, changing sugar into alcohol. The pulp is then steamed in huge vats and the vapour that comes off is distilled into a liquid. The result is so strong that water has to be added at a later stage to reduce the alcohol to a drinkable level.

For the first time, a woman has entered the formerly all-male preserve of Nardini grappa. Giuseppe's daughter, Cristina, is helping him to run the business. But it is unlikely that any Nardini, male or female, will change the recipe for such a successful product.

JOHN BRUNTON

Will someone call while you're out?

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John Brunton

Glories of the long good buy

Portobello Road market sells everything under the sun — or rain or hail, Joseph Connolly reports

By this morning the thousands who are addicted to Portobello Road in west London — claimed to be the longest, most famous and certainly the most colourful street market in the country — will be chafing at the bit. The market is renowned for cranking up at an ungodly hour am? Sam? — I have never had the courage or the will to do each and every Saturday morning come hail, snow, blizzard or hangover. At this winter both Christmas and New Year's Day fell on a Saturday, and although a weekend of a hardy and dedicated corps of dealers — eary of eye and —

It is like Carnaby Street ought to have been

But today, lose time. Dealers have had a re-week break, collectors of the dealers who live off the dealers will be salivating back, keen to replenish ocks as well as to rope in ne money to pay for all se festive excesses. Old hands will need no reduction to the glories of tobello Road, but for anyone who has merely heard the her romantic appellation has never experienced the ility, a treat is in-store. You not even have to spend any

money; most do not — they just come along for the show. Those who do spend, however, spend fairly prodigally: the market has sailed through the recession with barely a backward glance.

Whatever your interests, they will be catered for in Portobello Road. The road itself is endless — starting at the post end of Chepstow Villas, Notting Hill, and terminating at Goldborne Road. Moreover, the market takes in not just the street stalls that you would expect, but an endless succession of covered arcades and mini antiques emporia that form the core of the pretty, bright pastel-painted 19th-century terraces that sparkle like cassata above the good-natured hubbub of the reeking market below.

The fun spills sideways too into such streets as Westbourne Grove — in itself a major source of knicks, knacks and you-name-it — and everywhere the general carnival feel reigns supreme. It is rather like Carnaby Street ought to have been, but — even in the 1960s — never was.

Start at the Notting Hill end (but be warned, there is virtually no parking space anywhere) and be guided by the crowds. The first few stalls are tourist traps, naturally enough — Ye Olde Britische Inn signs, pub towels, fake Beattie badges and the most sticky chocolate popcorn you have ever inhaled — but soon enough you are



The cosmopolitan bustle of Portobello Road is in full swing by the middle of Saturday morning, although the dealers start horse-trading as early as Sam

into the heart of the matter: arcades, beckoning on all sides, overflowing stalls of old jewellery, vast Victorian kitchen equipment, parasols, 1930s Mickey Mouse watches, vintage pens, metronomes — and silver.

Silver is a clear favourite. There is beautiful, burnished brass and copper, to be sure, as well as bronze and inwreath — but silver rules the roost. Most popular seem to be unshaped wine coolers and carving sets, although also prominent are silver-topped canes and dazzling displays of magnifying glasses fashioned from the stumps of defunct but grandiose cutlery.

By now you will have encountered five or six Bob Dylan's waiting away, and a few ingenious oriental puppeteers. The children's favourite is an apple-checked organ-grinder who always contrives to have about her an abundance of puppies, never more than a few weeks old — not for sale, just for caressing.

As to prices and values — well, most of the traders are specialists in a single field, so an out-and-out steal is unlikely, but many antiques dealers with shops in upmarket areas buy from Portobello Road, and so prices tend to be more reasonable than you would expect (the earlier you arrive, the better) — and everyone will be around the following week if there are any worries; no fly-by-nights here.

Just how many specialists there are takes your breath away — not just in the fields you would expect, such as books, arts and crafts, ceramics, clocks, furniture, paintings, engravings and so on, but also in such arcane avenues as model steam-engines, buttons, lighters, pharmaceutical bottles, matchboxes, and even jelly moulds. Truly, if the world of old stuff intrigues you at all, an early visit to Portobello Road will repay itself — with interest.

Nearest tube: Notting Hill Gate (Central, Circle and District lines). Buses: 7, 12, 23, 27, 52, 88.

Half a dozen things you didn't know about Portobello Road market

1. It stands on the land of the 18th-century Portobello Farm, named after Admiral Vernon's capture of the city of Puerto Bello in the Gulf of Mexico.
2. The original market (only fruit and vegetables) began in 1822.
3. The first antique shop opened at No 165 in 1939.
4. In 1961, of 200 stallholders, just 35 dealt in antiques.
5. Today — including the covered arcades — there are more than 2,000 antique dealers.
6. The dealers horse-trade from 9am to 6.30pm. Collectors arrive at 8.30am, tourists between 10 and 11am.

Saleroom guide

□ The art-market year has already begun in the ballroom of the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, London W1 (information: 0277 362662), where antiques and fine art estimated at £20 million are on offer by 50 dealers. Highlights include a £300,000 manuscript of *Ali's Adventures in Wonderland*, hand-written and illustrated by the famous illuminator of the early 1900s, Alberto Sangorski. For those with more humble budgets, prices start at £10.

□ Still on the theme of great British book illustrations, three original Peter Rabbit drawings by the renowned children's author Beatrix Potter will be on offer (estimate £300-£500) on Wednesday at Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-581 7611), while a sheet of studies for that other Beatrix Potter masterwork *The Pig and the Pasty Pan* are expected to fetch £800-£1,200. Also for sale will be mementoes from the dawn of today's multimillion pound Beatrix Potter marketing indus-

try. A 1910 patent certificate for the manufacture of *Jerima Pudding* as a soft toy is offered at up to £300 with three photographs of the toy's prototype thrown in. Buyers need have no doubt about authenticity, as they are being offered by a Potter family member.

□ The biggest money-spinner on Wednesday should be a drawing of the Madonna and Child which spent many years pinned to the back of a kitchen door in a Birmingham council house. Having noticed its quality, a director of Halls Fine Art, the Shrewsbury auctioneers, called in Sotheby's experts who duly identified it as a preparatory study for a major altar piece in Rome by the 17th-century baroque artist Carlo Maratta. Maddeningly, however, this British discovery story will have an American ending, when Sotheby's sells it for an estimated \$35,000 in New York.

SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

LUCINDA GREEN

Three-day eventer

Where would you go? To Courchevel for two days' skiing, because I haven't been there before. I started skiing four years ago and I love it.

Who would be your perfect companion? A fantasy man — who I hope will exist one day. He would be amazingly funny and incredibly kind. He would also be able to ski really well and enjoy teaching me.

How would you get there? I'd fly to Paris on Thursday night and stay at the George V hotel off the Champs Elysees, where I have been once before. It is ridiculously expensive and I particularly like their bathrobes. We would take the whole of the next day to drive down to the Alps, stopping off for lunch at some hideaway place.

Where would you stay? The most important thing about the hotel in Courchevel would be the après ski. I don't mean parties, but wonderful facilities such as a sauna, an outdoor hot tub under the mountains and a masseur.

What essential piece of clothing or kit would you take? Silk thermal underwear and ski glasses that don't fog up.

What medicines would accompany you? Aspirin and four amica tablets three times a day to waylay bruising.

What would you have to eat and drink? An awful lot when you ski you usually take off weight, so you can eat as much as you like. Lunch would be at a restaurant on the mountain. I'd have soup, French bread and cheese, and I can never resist a *Glihwetz* or two. After coming off the mountain, we would stumble into a café for Ovaltine and a lovely chocolate something-or-other. After a snooze, we would drink champagne with a dinner of snails and raclette.

What would you like to find when you got home? My children — eight-year-old Freddie and Lissa, four.

What souvenir would you bring home? Well-cut sweatshirts for my children.

What would you like to find when you got home? My children — eight-year-old Freddie and Lissa, four.

Interview by Rosanna Greenstreet



Which books would you take to read? When am I going to get time to read a book?

What music would you listen to? Lightweight classical music such as Handel and Strauss and soppy things like "Lady in Red" by Chris de Burgh.

What film would you watch? *Pretty Woman*.

What luxury would you take? Chocolate truffles.

What piece of art would you like to look at? A sculpture by Rodin.

Who would be your least welcome guest? My accountant, because I find it hard to follow any conversation on figures.

What three things would you leave behind? Every single worry, English rain and the telephone.

What would you most like to do? I'm not telling you.

Who would you send a postcard to? My children — eight-year-old Freddie and Lissa, four.

What souvenir would you bring home? Well-cut sweatshirts for my children.

What would you like to find when you got home? My children — eight-year-old Freddie and Lissa, four.

Interview by Rosanna Greenstreet



Playing from left, Loretta Burns, David and Susan Flusfeder and Robin Burns

Bridging a gap

Make friends, live well and play to kill on a bridge weekend

EVERY august institution should have a motto. My university's was "Be Still And Know". The Ace of Clubs in Finchley has gone for "Bridge in Luxury With Easy Parking". It may not have any fancy mystical overtones and it certainly doesn't help with the getting of wisdom, but it is a frank formula that brings in the punters.

The club was started by Loretta Burns three and a half years ago. Her children had grown and left home. Bored, she decided she wanted to run a business. While working out what sort of business she wanted, she took some bridge lessons. (Her suave husband Robin, a stockbroker, used to play for two hours every afternoon.) "I realised there was a gap in the market," she says. Bridge in luxury with easy parking was born.

"The Ace of Clubs satisfies the tastes of bridge players who want the serious duplicate action (Wednesday nights at the Finchley headquarters, under the benevolent overseeing of referee John Harper from the English Bridge Union). It employs bridge internationals Neil Rosen and Dick Shek to teach new players the moves and old players some new wrinkles. They achieve the difficult trick of presenting information that helps the experienced as well as the novice. And for players who want the action of social plates and a luxury jaunt, it organises bridge weekends and holidays.

I joined the party for its weekend at Goodwood. It

began with Friday night bridge and dinner, and it ended with Sunday afternoon prizegiving (a very important feature, stresses Mrs Burns: "People love to get trophies"). This had been billed as a bridge, golf and tennis weekend. The weather overpowered the tennis players but the golfers did their thing on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The rest of the time — interrupted only by sleep, food and the fire alarm — there was the quiet frenzy that happens whenever bridge players in neat multiples of four get together in a room.

A lot of single people go on the bridge holidays, mostly female divorcees and widows, as well as some unmarrieds and a few couples risking it by playing with each other in public. Syd and Joe were the only widowers. (Both are in the garment business and joined the Ace of Clubs after their wives had died. They are now canny skillful players, firm new friends, and bridge holiday regulars.)

Then there was Patsy, who drives a white Mercedes sports car with personalised plates and was named Businesswoman of the Year 1993 for her dog insurance company. She has known Mrs Burns since they were teenage

girls growing up in St John's Wood together.

Mrs Burns took warm charge of her guests. There were a few minor ructions — a temporary falling out between one lady and her three friends, which Mrs Burns chivvied back into friendship; a skirmish between a married couple (I'm a casino that would have been very good. Not bridge," took the urbane continental man to his unrepentant wife, who struck back later by criticising him for playing too quickly — he "does everything too quickly and not thoroughly," she announced). The two bachelor brothers argued while they played but made it up later on the golf course.

Then there was the drama of the fire alarm when the first night's sleep was broken at three in the morning and everybody gathered shivering in the courtyard.

There was a trophy for almost everybody — high individual scores, high team scores, best golfer (won by one of the bachelor brothers), as well as a trophy for every pair who bid and made a slam. The winners were clapped to the front of the room, where they got to kiss Mrs Burns and pose proudly for photographs. Afterwards some of the couples went home and some of the ladies went to the bar, and a few stragglers stayed in the room eyeing the cardboard box that still had a few trophies left inside.

DAVID FLUSFEDER

What the papers said: Derwent May's bookbuyers' guide

5/5 Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column indicates the length of reviews to date in national broadsheet newspapers.

3/5 *Matissier* anglo-aise: A. S. Byatt is the first writer to hit the 1994 headlines, with *The Matissier* (Cham, £9.99) — three short stories, each involving a painting by the colourful French post-impressionist. "Like *Matissier*," said Helen Dunmore in *The Observer*, "she is excited by the way a vase of flowers, a white book or a human being stands in the stream of everyday light, and like *Matissier* she knows how to put down her observations." The book "hits the imagination's retina with all the vibrant splatter of an exploding paintbox," confirmed Peter Kemp in *The Sunday Times*. However, he found that the stories lacked "emotional or psychological depth — instead, they sparkle with a meditative joie de vivre".

In *The Times*, Victoria Glendinning said that, whereas Byatt's novels dwell on the importance of "the life of the mind", these stories "stress the parallel glory of the life of the senses". The recipe for society that the stories offered seemed to be "more *luxe, calme and volupté* for intellectuals and the politically correct — and more mental discipline for the rest". Col cms: 144

4/5 Merry Lewis' Anthony Burgess, in one of the last articles he wrote, declared in *The Observer* that "Norman Lewis's prose is almost edible. In old age, the doyen of English travel writers is writing better than ever." He was review-



ing *An Empire of the East* (Cape, £16.99), an account by the 85-year-old wanderer of his visit to Indonesia. In *The Daily Telegraph* Ian Thomson hailed Lewis as being "among the great comic writers of our time", although "there is real horror in the blood-letting that followed Indonesia's annexation of East Timor in 1975", and here Lewis "subdues his own voice in favour of clear, objective reportage". In *The Independent on Sunday*, Katie Hickman thought that the book's tone was sometimes "more than a little weary" — but that was "no wonder" considering all the bloodshed he had witnessed. She hoped this book might cause a similar outcry to the one produced by his revelations of atrocities in Brazil. Col cms: 206

3/5 Mother of the arts: Lord Gower's mother, Pamela Cooper, has produced her life story, *A Cloud of Forgetting* (Quartet, £19.95) — from Edwardian delights to war-torn Beirut. "Not for people who dislike hunting and name-dropping," said Sarah Bradbury in *The Spectator*, "but an enjoyable read". Col cms: 72

2 Men and a Gavel.



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Heather Kirby meets the family that believes togetherness grows on the greens and fairways of the golf course

Playing a round of happy families

"WE HAVE found golf one of the most unifying factors of family life," Norman Hampel, a personnel management recruitment consultant during office hours and an enthusiastic golfer the rest of the time, is adamant: the family that plays together, stays together. His wife, Sarah, agrees. "Golf is a tremendous way of being with your family, and all their friends, and the good thing is it doesn't matter how bad you are. Because of the handicap system which levels it out, everyone can play together regardless of their age or skill."

The Hampels have four children, Simon, 25, John, 23, Nicola, 22 and Angus, 20, but they represent only a fraction of the Hampel clan. "I have two brothers and we all have three sons and a daughter and we all play together when we can," Mr Hampel says.

If their busy lifestyles make a game of weekend golf difficult to organise, the Sussex, Norfolk and Buckinghamshire Hampels meet at least once a year, when they go for a golfing holiday at Trevelse, north Cornwall, a migration that has become a clan ritual. No matter where in the world they happen to be — the Sussex Hampel is chairman of a division of ICI, one niece is a nurse in Uganda, a nephew flies the globe managing golfer Ian Woosnam — the Cornish pilgrimage is now sacrosanct.

"Golf has provided us parents with an opportunity to let all the cousins get to know each other well, and it gives us a way of keeping everyone in contact," Mr Hampel says. "Now they bring their boyfriends and girlfriends with them to Cornwall too, and even if their friends are hopeless at the game, they get dragged on to the course and in the end love it."

"I know a lot of people who go to exotic places or who have villas in Spain and France, but they envy us our golfing holiday. The joy is that as a family you become closer because you play a game together, and what is tremendous is that we are treated like friends rather than parents. We have never been the kind to put dummies at one table and youngsters at another, and because the generations can mix at golf — a 70-year-old can

play with an eight-year-old — that makes it all the more fun."

In Cornwall the clan plays once and sometimes twice a day, and if anyone doesn't feel like golf, there is generally a game of Scrabble or bridge going. "We also have beach barbecues, and gentle discos," Mr Hampel adds. "Golf is great for socialising. Often you lose your children and can find yourself at lunchtime feeding children you've never seen before, but you know another family will be feeding yours, so that's all right."

"Golfers seem to move around in herds, so when the children are playing locally you can discover anything up to 16 of them descending on your home. Luckily I and my two brothers have wives who seem to be able to cope with feeding a horde of people on a shoestring, and at a moment's notice."

There are 2,500 golf clubs in the UK with approximately one million registered members; a further million pay and play at municipal courses. The price of membership ranges from a modest £200 a year to, say, Wentworth, Surrey, one of the country's top golf clubs, where a year's membership costs £2,750, plus a £600 levy to spend on eating and drinking at the club house. The cost of equipment can be as little or as much as you want to pay. A junior set of bag and eight clubs is less than £100, and most golfers trade in their old clubs for new ones.

Christopher Plumridge, a spokesman for The Golf Foundation, the national body for the development of junior golf, says: "I started playing golf when I was six. It's like malaria, once you get bitten by the bug it stays with you."

"GOLF can be played in all weathers. They play in the Arctic with red balls, although you couldn't play in deep snow because the balls would disappear, but I can't remember being fed up about having to play in bad weather. I would have played every day if I'd been allowed to."

"I think a lot of parents choose golf for their children because it teaches them self-reliance, independence, a capacity to abide by the rules. There is no opportunity for faking injury or conning referees, as in so many other

sports. Also it isn't a gladiatorial contest, it's something that is between you, the course and the ball. And it's a game children can play on their own: they don't have to rely on other people turning up."

The Golf Foundation sponsors coaching for some 40,000 children a year in this country by paying half the tuition fees of professional golfers, who take groups of up to 30 children at a time. Mr Plumridge says: "It means each child can pay as little as 25p for an hour's tuition. Golf used to be regarded as an elitist, rich man's sport, but that is not true today."

According to Sarah Hampel, a golfing hobby need not overburden the family's finances.

"WE never bought the children new equipment; with so many cousins in the family there was rarely any need to. There were always hand-me-downs available, so they made do. Anyway, they rather liked to inherit something from an older cousin, and it taught them to share and to take care of clubs which they knew someone else would be able to use after them."

Norman and Sarah Hampel live near Denham golf course — "I'm sure my husband only married me because of my membership," Mrs Hampel says — where the professional, John Sheridan, has always encouraged young players. "The kids could go during the holidays for lessons at £1 a time. My friends sent their children, so they practised with each other."

"Even teeny ones can use a wooden club; I think Simon was just three when he got his first plastic club, and went round the garden trying to hit a ball. My father was a golfer but my brothers and I weren't. I took it up when the children did because I realised I would never see anybody otherwise, and I'm eternally glad I did. It has provided us with endless family fun."

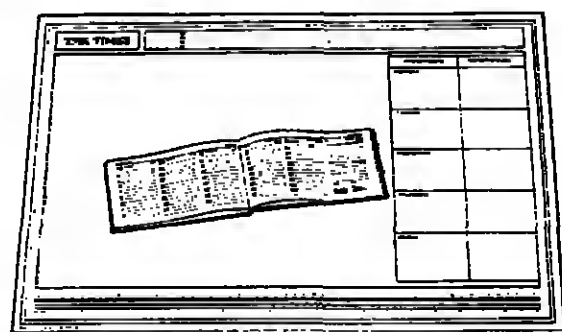
● The Golf Foundation is a charity which gets no government subsidy for its work with children; it relies on fund-raising and donations from golfers who support its efforts to bring more children into the game. For information about its coaching programme, write to Foundation House, Hanbury Manor, Ware, Herts SG12 0UH (0920 48044).



The golfing Hampels, from left, Katie Naylor (née Hampel), Anthony Orchard, Nicola Hampel, Simon Hampel, Norman Hampel, John Hampel with Rebecca Naylor on his shoulders, Sarah Hampel (née Orchard), Dominic Orchard, Jane Hampel, Angus Hampel, Ronnie Hampel with Rupert Naylor on his shoulders, Edward Orchard, Samara Hampel, Jack Naylor. The baby is Saskia Naylor, the dog is Karly.

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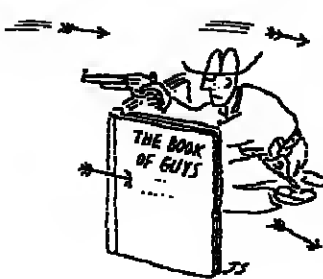
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THE LOCOMOTION

If you should find yourself in the leafy surrounds of Hampstead Heath in northwest London one Saturday, and you should come across a posse of two dozen adults walking backwards, you haven't accidentally trodden on life's rewind button, you are merely witnessing the new craze of "retro walking". This "power walking regime" is the brainchild of a chap called Terry Clarke of Healthshape Studio. Of course, the whole idea would smell more original if Network Southeast hadn't exploited the concept first.



THE CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

You've never gotten around to ploughing your way through Freud, and now you don't have to. The latest in high-speed "teach yourself psychology" comes from Garrison Keillor in his newly-published tome,

The Book of Guys. Keillor reckons that "girls had it better from the beginning. They were allowed to play in the house, where the books were and the adults, and boys were sent outdoors like livestock... Boys ran around in the yard with toy guns going kkkshh-kkkshh, fighting wars for made-up reasons and arguing about who was dead, while girls stayed inside and played with dolls, creating complex family groups and learning to solve problems through renegotiation and role-playing. Which gender is better equipped, on the whole, to live an adult life, would you guess? And that'll be 80 guineas, thank you. Next?

THE ADVICE

A spankingly fresh suggestion to save the world lands in the postbag of advice columnist Ann Landers, extolling the virtues of nudism as a prescription for world peace and goodwill to all men. "Think of the time and energy, not to mention money, that would be saved if we didn't have to shop for clothes," writes Ann's ingenious correspondent. Even better, we could develop a way to hibernate like hedgehogs all winter, not only cutting fuel bills, but ensuring world peace, because we'd all be fast asleep.

MODES

SPOT THE CULT: TRUE OR FALSE?

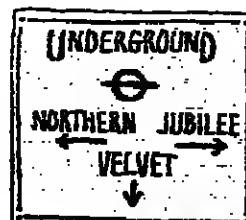
A) Forget Coles Notes. Now you can also buy lecture notes, saving you the bother not only of reading *Hamlet* or *A Tale of Two Cities*, but even of attending the university lecture to hear what the Prof has to say about them. B) Got an insomniac dog? You can now buy special audio tapes with titles like *Doggy Lullabies* and *Reverie for Rover* to soothe him to sleep. C) Fashion-conscious trends can now keep their heads warm in winter — without ruining their carefully sculpted hair-dos by wearing a hat — with a new heat-sensitive but invisible hairspray that warms your scalp the colder it gets.

Answers

A) True. Now on sale in America from brainy entrepreneurs with a gift for academic shorthand. Some professors are even taking royalties on sales of their boot-leg lectures. B) True. Tapes are also available for sleepless cats. C) False. Stick to a Homburg.

THE CLUB

New club, old name. Latest addition to Soho's night scene is Velvet Underground, a basement discotheque in Charing Cross Road. The walls, and even the ceiling, are hung with swoops of velvet. Perfect for recreating the feeling of being one of those velvet-lined musical jewellery boxes.



THE KNOWALL

It's such a bore having to go all the way down to the pub just to learn some vital new piece of information, like the precise mating season for South American marmots, and whether the first foot on the moon was a right foot or a left foot. Now you can say goodbye to "lack of pub information misery" because LWT plans to bring pub quizzes to the television set in your living-room very soon. So, combining these with home shopping and pizza deliveries, there will soon be no reason to step outdoors, forcing American Express to change its card commercials slogan to say: "Don't stay home without it."

THE SINGALONG

Eager to join the pub singers, but too snooty to stoop to crooning "My Way" on the Karaoke machine? Then keep your eyes peeled for the latest in pub singalongs — Opera Karaoke. The strains of "Nessun Dorma" are already seeping out from London's swankier saloon bars, with Gilbert and Sullivan hits next in the pipeline. Call me when someone is brave enough, or mad enough, to get up and accompany *The Electrification of the Soviet Union*.

JOE JOSEPH

And the bride looked lovely in...

What sort of dress will the bride of '94 wear? Anything from virginal white to flamenco, Alicia Drake reports

Divorce rates in Britain may be at an all-time high, but weddings still take place, and the wedding dress remains sacred. The British female, notorious for her frugal clothing budget, spends an average of £890 on a bridal outfit for just one day. The most significant dress of her life, it represents the ultimate in self-expression, and a chance to indulge in pure fantasy.

For many that fantasy still takes shape as something long, white and flouncy, but there has been a move away from the "fairy princess" dress as brides demand a more sophisticated silhouette. This is partly because women are marrying later: the average age of brides has risen to 25, and with it their confidence and daring. Rosie Bennett, the bridal manager of Liberty's, says: "The big, girly look is out."

Instead, more brides are staging their weddings around a theme, and whether it be medieval, harvest festival or horse-riding, they want their dress to complement the total drama of the wedding. Sandra Boler, the editor of *Brides* magazine, says: "Nowadays every reader's letter starts with, 'I want my wedding to have the theme of...'. Brides are no longer satisfied with just walking into a shop with an empty mind; most have their hearts set on a certain style and want to stamp their own identity on the day."

Shops have responded by stocking dresses which bear influences of historic designs or fashion trends, yet except for the odd flash of tartan or sliver of black lace, most dresses still come only in symbolic white or ivory. For the bride who seeks individuality, the common solution is to find a designer or do it herself.

Charlotte Bentley, an editorial assistant on *History Today*, wanted a wedding dress to reflect her enjoyment of history. She was frustrated by the choice in the shops and says: "I looked through hundreds of bridal magazines, which kept spouting 'this is your special day', yet everything in them was so familiar and conformed to strict social convention. There were lots of pretty, desirable dresses, but I didn't want to feel like a paper doll with a wedding dress slotted on." Ms Bentley studied Gainsborough portraits and worked with a designer to come up with a dress and jacket in eau de nil duchesse satin which had a romantic, 18th-century feel.

Another wedding dress with historic connotations is that of actress Alex Fiennes, who chose an extravagant medieval-style outfit of purple velvet, raw silk, gold organza and metalwork neck plate. Colour was the deciding factor behind Stephanie Dale's choice of blue and cream



Top centre: Alex Fiennes wears a layered, medieval-style dress designed by Michelle Clapton, of 32 Reardon House, London E1 (071-481 9842). Left: Charlotte Bentley in her eau de nil duchesse satin dress and jacket designed by Anna James, of Bramshott, Hampshire.

Above: Stephanie Dale wears a navy blue flamenco dress with cream edging, from Brighter Brides, Long Newton, Tetbury, Gloucestershire (0686 505051). Photographer: Denzil McNeelance. Stylist: Alicia Drake. Shot on location at the Great Conservatory, Syon Park, Middlesex (available for summer weddings, 081-560 0881). Flowers by Wild Bunch, 22 Earham Street, London WC1.



Above: Rebecca Maciejewska wears a cream, full-length, Edwardian-style coat and sheath dress designed by Briony Sergeant, of 20 Well Walk, London NW3 (071-435 0937).

Left: Alex Abberton in her mother's cream duchesse satin dress with full-length veil. Below: Diane Jackson wears an apricot silk organza and tulle dress, incorporating a ready-made corset, designed by Nicole Urbanski, of 1 Edburton Avenue, Brighton, Sussex (0273 5650270). Michael Jackson wears a tartan suit, designed by Nicole Urbanski, with his own hand-printed green silk lining.

flamenco dress. Aged 35, and having lived with her fiancé for some years, Ms Dale felt it inappropriate to walk up the aisle in white but, more importantly, she says: "It was a vanity thing: pale colours make me look washed out and I wanted to look like something out of *Gone with the Wind*."

After several disappointing shopping trips, Ms Dale flew to Seville and bought a dramatic flamenco dress which had the wedding congregation clapping in the aisles. She decided there must be other women who wanted more than what she calls "ye olde white wedding frock", so she has launched a wedding dress agency called Brighter Brides. Ms Dale aims to cater for "first and second marriages and brides of all ages who want a show-stopping dress, not necessarily white."

Before the late 18th century, brides were not bound by colour convention and, while white was popular, often wore blue, silver, gold, yellow or purple. Avril Hart, assistant curator of historical dress at the Victoria and Albert Museum, says: "White as the symbol of virginity started to be recognised in the mid-18th century, and the fashion for bridal veils began only in the 19th century with the ready availability of lace."

Today, the most common complaint about the wedding dress is the huge cost of the one-day wonder. Rebecca Maciejewska was determined that her outfit would be one she could wear again, so she chose an Edwardian-style, full-length coat in cream self-patterned silk with a colour embroidery border. She says: "I'd seen too many friends with white dresses that cost thousands of pounds and which, after one day's wear, ended life in a Cellophane coffin."

For Alex Abberton the solution was simple: she wore her mother's dress. A classy style in duchesse satin, the dress had lain dormant for 30 years but needed only a dry-clean and slight alteration.

Diane and Michael Jackson married in Mexico and returned to London for a



Humanist blessing, which took place in the garden. Ms Jackson wanted a dress that was a combining theatre with fun. "I wanted a look inspired by *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*," she says, "but without looking like one of the ugly sisters."

Ms Jackson bought a corset that was two sizes too small and took it to designer Nicole Urbanski, who specialises in corsetry and who restretched it to fit and added the skirt of apricot silk organza and tulle, stitching net saddlebags under the skirt and cloth sausages into the corset to exaggerate the silhouette and cleavage. Ms Jackson sported ringlets and a

bouquet of cauliflowers, aubergines and carrots. Her husband, Michael, wore a tuxedo.

● Wedding frock sales Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 (071-734 1234), now to end Jan: cream Thai-silk Neil Cunningham "Forever England" Cinderella-style with roses overskirt, reduced from £1,300 to £300. Selfridges, Oxford Street, London W1 (071-629 1234), now to end Jan: Berkeley dresses: 100 per cent ivory silk with lace and pearl bead bodice and sleeves, reduced from £1,495 to £1,121. Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (071-730 1234), now to Jan 29: Catherine Rayner "Louise" Edwardian-style fitted bodice with rose detail on sleeves, reduced from £1,035 to £500.

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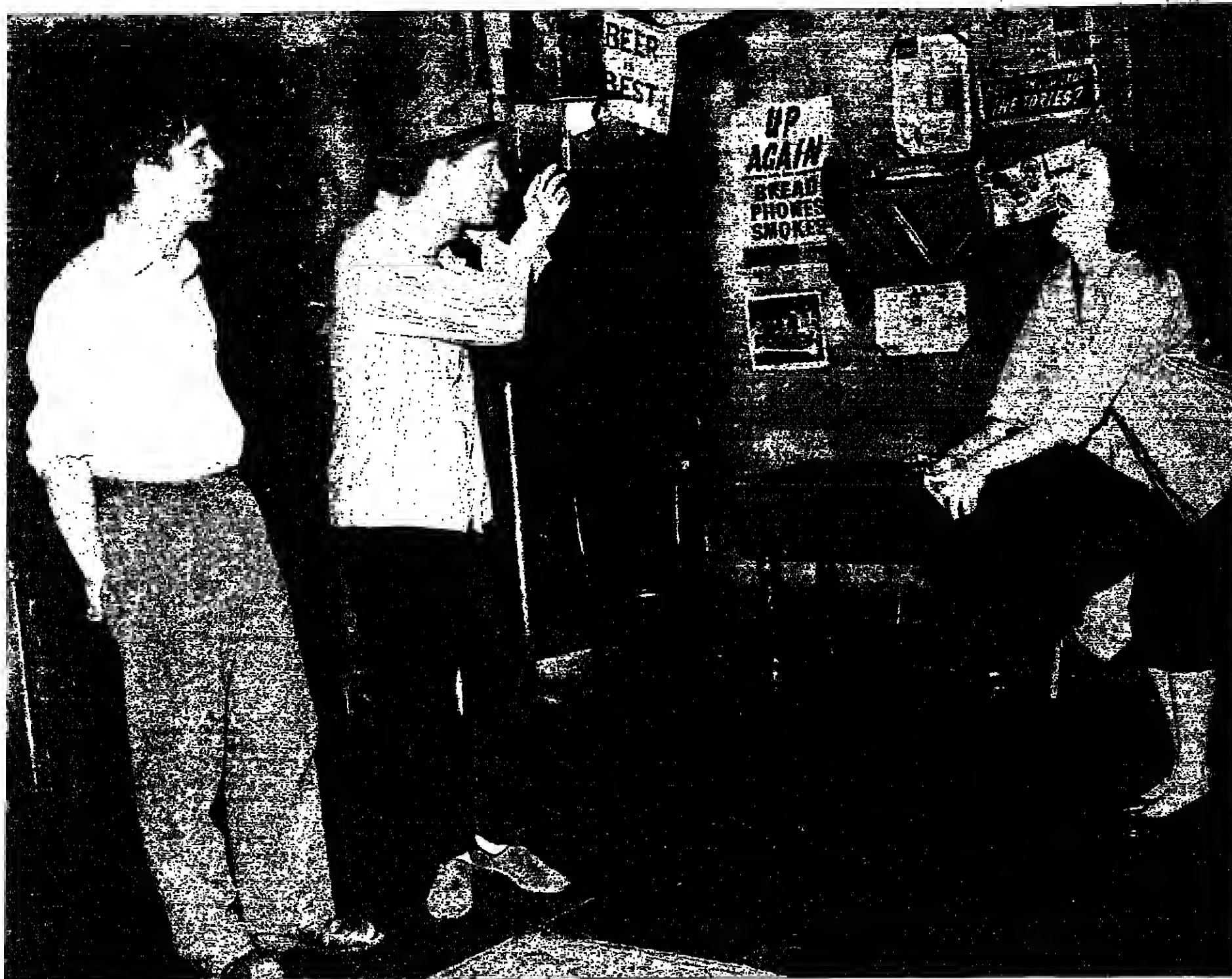
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Jimmy Porter speaks for an alienated generation in the original Royal Court Theatre production of John Osborne's seminal play, *Look Back in Anger*, in 1956

A look at the present, in anger

You may remember the word dissent. On the other hand, you may be young. In either case, you will know the meaning of that word, dissent, but you will not recall the time when it carried a capital D and spoke its name out of prosenimian arches, television and cinema screens, bookshelves and rock'n'roll catalogues. What has our culture come to, that it no longer harbours Dissent?

John Major thinks himself unlucky to be so pilloried and unpopular. He should try being called Macmillan, or Wilson, or dear Jim Callaghan. Then he would know what unlucky is.

Unlucky for a politician is lucky for the rest of us (of whatever political shade). Unlucky, for a politician, is to be at the centre of the circle when

the circumference is in revolt, up in arms, giving you a hard time. The circumference, it was, the culture. It was not the No Turning Back group.

And the culture Dissent. There may have been a mainstream that tended to be safe and commercial, but it was fed by tributaries that were anything but. These were the source of the errand and the dangerous and they leached into the mainstream, from time to time dominating it.

Now the culture assents: the mainstream is the only stream. The tributaries are reduced to a trickle. They lack sufficient power to invade the mainstream and the mainstream willfully lacks the tidal pull that once drew in the eddies of dissent.

The result is a culture gone to blandness. A culture in which a new *Look Back in*

Whatever happened to dissent?
Peter Barnard bemoans the lack of adventure in modern culture

Anger, a new *Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*—even a new *J'accuse*—exists, if at all, in isolated backwaters.

West End theatre, literature, books... these are now wastelands of assent. The West End, specifically, even embraces Majorism with a back-to-basics policy: *Carousel*, *Jane Eyre*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Relative Values*. These we have loved, but are old flames all the theatre can fix us up with? What happened to a night out with a bright, irreverent, young thing?

Books? Please, don't even mention books. The 1993 hardback fiction Top Ten includes a Jeffrey Archer, a Jilly Cooper, two Sue Townsends (grant an amused dissent mark here for *The Queen and I*), Dick Francis, John le Carré, Susan Hill: some lovely people, some fine writing, but, well, nothing you would want to tear apart in a rage.

The real oddity of this age of assent is that it has all the

components of the very opposite. It has a second-rate Government, an invisible Opposition; it has a dreadful recession; it has politicians who are very nearly out of control; it has unemployment that has so much homelessness that the homeless have their own newspaper.

And faced with all this the culture, a.k.a. entertainment, gives us... *Spitting Image*, a programme of embarrassing awfulness now almost entirely given over to four-form smut. It gives us... right-on alternative comedians, such as Paul Merton (a genius), selling soap on television. Imagine, if you can, Tony Hancock doing that. And the culture brings... the dismal *Aspects of Love* back to the West End for a second run. Part of the trouble is complacency. A.N. Wilson was on *Start the Week* the other day, admitting, in so many words,

that English books (he was harsh to include his own) had become unchallengeable. That he said, is what publishers want, and he is right. They publish 70,000 books a year, an absurd number. There is no way proper critical functions can be applied to such a huge output, so they publish big-name safe bets and fodder.

Both categories, with honourable exceptions, have common denominators: sex, or violence, or sex and violence. These now masquerade as dissent. The F word, or the quivering rear end in mid-hump, are the new shock troops of culture. Provocation has come to mean foreplay.

Osborne, Sillitoe, Orton et al may have shocked but their shock tactics had a purpose. They made you think.

Today's pretenders make you squirm. Now you switch off the television or leave the theatre feeling voyeuristic if you are feeling anything beyond indifference. So desperate has West End theatre become, so devoid of inspiration, that it turns to *Hair*, the least significant of Sixties' sirens, and deservedly gets its fingers burnt.

Oddly, television is not quite

as guilty as the rest of the culture, though it would have the best excuse. Most of the Thatcherite lunacy of commercial franchises bought from the Treasury (the supreme act of cultural prostitution) TIV has turned into a cultural joke. Whereas Thames made proper programmes, Carlton now makes pap. While all about were gazing upward and shaking their fists at whirling satellites threatened cultural catastrophe (they said), the real enemy turned out to reside in HM Treasury.

Nonetheless, the BBC and Channel 4 now carry the torch for all that is left of cultural dissent. From serious investigation to humorous balloon-pricking, from *Cutting Edge* to *Have I Got News For You*, press buttons 1, 2 and 4 for the only surviving examples of make-you-think mass audience culture.

This is not enough. No wonder the present generation of 20-year-olds is largely of the political right and seemingly only marches if the batonmaster is a fascist. The culture has let down radicalism and, with politics discredited and inert, that is a dangerous state of affairs.

EXHIBITIONS

Visions from the human melting pot

The work of the Argentine painter Xul Solar is tiny in size but epic in scale, John Russell Taylor says

The Argentine painter Xul Solar clearly had some seminal experiences in the cinemas of his young manhood, though born too early to have been like his compatriot Manuel Puig, "betrayed by Rita Hayworth". How else to explain some of the more extraordinary inventions among "The Architectures" the show at the Courtauld Institute Galleries which effectively introduces this towering figure of the Argentine avant-garde to Britain?

Xul Solar's brands of visionary architecture had a certain basis in practicality since he did study engineering and architecture for a year or two in Buenos Aires before working his passage to Europe on a cargo boat in 1912, when he was 24. He originally intended to go to Hong Kong; his art might have been very different had he ever arrived.

Instead he jumped ship in London, and made his way almost immediately to Paris, where he lived, with intervals in his mother's home town, near Genoa, until 1924. (In a typical Argentine mix his mother was Italian and his father Latvian.)

While in Paris he began painting seriously and had his first exhibition in Milan in 1920, where his work was shown alongside that of the sculptor Arturo Martini, shown in London at the Accademia, "Italiana", two years ago. The earliest "Architectures" of the show date from about this time, and are very wild, and woolly.

Like all of his works on paper they are tiny in size, but vast in scale. Organically shaped, with more than a hint of Gaudí, these imaginary buildings hover between vision and nightmare. In the early Twenties Xul travelled to Germany,

and was clearly aware of Bruno Taut and his utopian architectural projects (we know that Xul read German and owned the theoretical writings of Kandinsky early on).

Even in these European drawings there is still something distinctly Latin American, some detail which refers clearly to pre-Columbian art. And when Xul returns to Buenos Aires in 1924, this element becomes much more prominent. He has already evolved his own style, able to absorb a touch of Klee, a passing reference to de Chirico, and yet remain entirely personal.

His imaginary buildings, become less expressionistic, more deco, as the decade progresses, and he begins to be fascinated by the tacky cardboard cinemas of the Argentine provinces. He also becomes absorbed in language. Jorge Luis Borges was his closest friend, and Xul spent some time evolving a synthetic Latin-American language called Neo-Criollo, sometimes constructing his buildings from words in it.

The final phase, between 1945 and his death in 1963, was rather more down-to-earth, though, it does not look it. Many of the buildings were designed as possible cheap housing for the poor and deprived of the Delta.

Why, he thought, should they not have colour and fantasy in their lives, when it was actually no more expensive than grim functionalism. Why, indeed, his work seems to say, should not we all?

● *Courtauld, Festive, Galleries, Somerset House, Strand, WC2 7JL. 10.30-5.30pm, Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun. 2-6pm, until February 27. Admission (includes permanent collection) £3, concessions £1.50.*



Street scene: *Dos Ruas*, a 1922 watercolour on paper by Xul Solar, the Argentine artist

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Discover the world's best

By the steps of St Louis Cathedral an eight-year-old boy tap-dances to Sweet Georgia Brown; a few yards on a black woman dressed as a gypsy and a white man dressed as Davy Crockett sing country blues duet; and over by the Cabildo, between the shoeshine man and the Lucky Dog stand, a preppy youth in a brass-buttoned blazer belts out tenor arias from Verdi. The mixture is not untypical...

Nick Cohn steps out in New Orleans - part of a 72-page special Travel issue highlighting the world's best for travellers, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

Drawings from The J. Paul Getty Museum From Leonardo to Van Gogh



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New lessons from a Lerner

NEW YORK THEATRE: The latest Broadway revival of *My Fair Lady*



Richard Chamberlain (Higgins) has a lesson for Melissa Errico (Eliza) in *My Fair Lady*

possibility of fully delineating the battle lines drawn in Shaw's play.

Davies fought a running battle with the executor of Alan Jay Lerner's estate, who championed Lerner's romanticised vision as realised in the

original production by director Moss Hart. The schizophrenic quality of the result is neither as captivating as a first-class traditional revival nor as arresting or infuriating as a full deconstruction might be, but there are charms and

surprises enough. Chief among the former are Chamberlain's Higgins, with the actor's matinee-idol charisma and a strong baritone buoying his spoken-sung songs, and the unfappable Pickering of Paxton Whitehead.

Melissa Errico has a lovely singing voice, but little stage presence, and she is undermined by Davies's innovation of having Eliza voice "his" so forcefully that she reassembles a whale spraying water through its snout. Julian Holloway - pleasant as Doohickey.

Tommy Tune was brought in to stiffen up Donald Saddler's choreography and, though uncredited, is obvious in every production tankard-click in the "Little Bit of Luck" routine. Aside from interpretation battles, the revival suffers somewhat from being designed for a long tour before Broadway - the sets are sparse and a bit worn. Still, the production is engaging, and Davies's innovations suggest that he ought to be given free rein.

HOLLY HILL

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Low couture reaches a new high in my wardrobe

A Christmas present that is not worth discussing by the time the Twelve Days are over was probably not worth receiving in the first place, so I make no apology for a delayed account of one of the most precious gifts I have ever received.

Clothes have always been a bit of a problem for me, especially working clothes. I need to feel warm and comfortable; protected, too, but free to allow the weather's cooling breezes to chill my fevered frame if I happen to be doing hard labour. It is a lot to ask of a garment. In fact, it is so much to ask that I have not come across one that fits the entire bill. And so I have what is known in the family as a "trouser basket", from which I produce all manner of clothes with the flourish of a magician drawing rabbits from a hat.

I have just been to turn it over (as one might a compost heap) and

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY



found garments to suit every farming operation. There is a pair of heavy cords, which are versatile but not as all-embracing as the pair of even heavier cords which need stout braces to keep them up lest they crash to my ankles in mid-furrow. These massive trousers are cut high across the small of the back, and thickly lined to keep out any blast of chilly air. That is why I keep the lighter cords for when the days are mild; I sweat less in them.

This all assumes that it has not been raining and there is no R in the month. In the rainier of the R months, the sheep are likely to be in the yard. At feeding-time it is impossible to keep one's legs remotely dry when the ewes,

sudden like sponges after an overnight downpour, rub against you in anticipation of food. If I wore the very heavy, or even the moderately heavy cords they would be soggy until lunchtime, so I have a pair of very light, synthetic

trousers of the most miserable grey, which can go from drenched to dry in a matter of minutes before the stove. That is three pairs of trousers so far. In addition, I have cleaner trousers for sitting around the house, and another pair to wear if I have to pop into town, as well as a Best Pair if I want to kid anyone that I am a farmer of some substance. That is my repertoire of trousers, which would be bearable were I not paranoid about not being able to



lay hands on the pair I want and so carry a spare pair of each. You begin to picture the trouser basket.

That brings me to the jackets. I have a much-loved tweed one, with thick lining and pockets deep en-

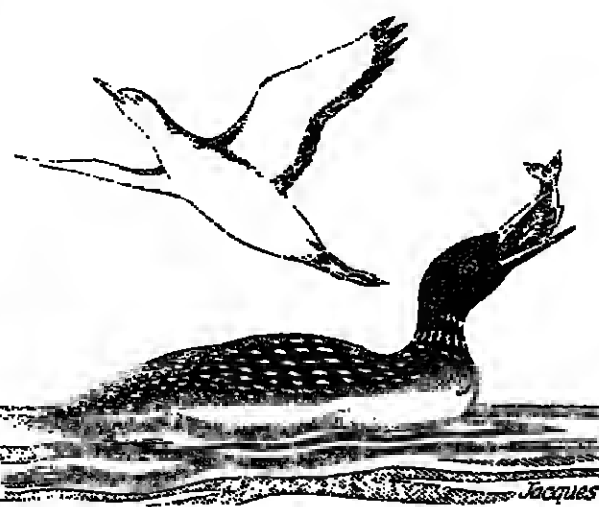
ough to hold a packet of sandwiches, string and a knife; a grubby waxed jacket that looks as though a herd of cows have calved on it, but which is vital to my accounting system because the tickets from all the auctions I have been to in the last three years are still in its pockets; and my most recent acquisition — a cosy, garment from New Zealand which, I'm told, all the smart Kiwi farmers wear. It is called a "Swami" and grown men are reputed to hang on to them for years, like old teddy bears. Mine is dark brown, and you put it on over your head, like a shirt that does not unbutton; it has a hood and is cut with no waist so that if I were to tie a length of cord around my midriff I could pass for Prior Tuck.

I thought my extensive wardrobe was complete, but Santa had other ideas. On Christmas Eve, we went across to Dilly's to wish the old boy a merry Christmas. We sang a verse of a carol, hampered on the door and loaded him with mince pies and a bottle of rum, and were just about to leave when he called, "Hang on. I've got something for yer." He went upstairs

and returned laden with the most massive duffel coat I have seen. It was clearly of some age and might well have been worn by Jack Hawkins in *The Cruel Sea*, were it not that as I got closer to it the tang was less of salt than of stale milking parlour. No matter, it was in fine condition, and probably made of far better cloth than a similar garment today. There is a moth-hole or two, but none sufficiently large to admit a gale of wind, and from the moment I slipped my arms into the fuzzy-smelling cloth I knew that this was it. At last my trouser basket would have a jewel in its crown.

Lambing is about to start, and as I leave the warmth of the house for the farmyard I shall don it with the solemnity with which a monarch would receive the coronation robe, for this garment is worthy of no less respect. Thank you Dilly, thank you Santa.

Feather report



The great northern diver is known as a loon in America

Lonely cries, loony tunes

Divers are primitive-looking birds — and primitive-sounding birds, too. They are what the Americans call loons, and their weird howls have come echoing across picturesque Canadian lakes in quite a few Hollywood films.

The common loon of America is the bird known to us as the great northern diver, which does not actually breed in this country. We have small numbers of red-throated divers and black-throated divers nesting on lochs and lochans in the wild and boggy parts of Scotland, and they too have wailing cries like a child in pain.

Just now there are plenty of divers of all three species wintering around the coasts of Britain. The great northern divers are commonest in the north and west, some of them coming from Greenland and some probably from Canada. They are the largest of the three, with a sleek-looking body lying low on the water, a thick neck, an angular forehead and a fearsome dagger of a bill.

In May you can see them off the Hebrides in brilliant, spangled summer plumage, but now they are dull brown above and silvery below. They usually stay far out at sea, diving for fish, and moving very fast under the water; but they will follow a shoal of herring closer inshore.

In the choppy water it is often difficult to see them, let alone make out which species they are. But the red-throated divers that are commonest along the east coast feed closer in, diving for flatfish and crustaceans in the bays, and they are fairly distinctive if you get a reasonable view. They

are comparatively light, small birds, with a speckled brown back and a noticeably up-tipped bill.

As for the black-throated diver, that is the bird in the middle in terms of size, and the hardest to be sure of, although it has a much darker brown back than the other two species.

Birds of all three species are occasionally found on inland waters, and a black-throated diver spent several weeks at the end of last year on a park lake at Stevenage, in Hertfordshire.

It is well worth following the divers back to Scotland when spring comes. The red-throated live up to their name, with a brilliant scarlet patch on the front of their peary-grey necks. The black-throated are even more striking, with an exquisite pattern of black lines at the side of their throats. Their cries quickly cease to alarm, and take on a wild beauty for the watcher.

The black-throated divers stay on the larger lochs, nesting on the islets. The red-throated divers can be found on quite small, peaty pools, and often fly down to the sea to fish. As they skim over the heather, wings beating fast, they make another cry, a strange goose-like barking, which is one of the most haunting of all the cries of the lonely places.

DERWENT MAY

What's about Birds — Listen out for the first mistle thrush singing as the days get longer. Twickers — Serin, Ramsgate, Kent; black scoter picked up at Blackpool. Lancashire; red-breasted goose, Wallasey Island, Essex. Details from Birdline, 0891 700222. Calls cost 36p a minute; cheap rate, 45p at all other times.

Wildlife gets a shot in the arm

Shooting organisations have agreed voluntary guidelines with the Government to reduce poisoning by lead shot. Nick Nuttall reports

Lead shot is considered the ideal pellet for finely built, lightweight British shotguns, but it is a material linked with the poisoning of wildlife and some birds of prey. So the good news is that it should have all but disappeared from wetland areas by autumn 1997.

Shooting organisations, conservationists and the Government's nature advisers have confirmed that all 12-bore weapons, the most popular size for shooting wildfowl, should fire only unleaded pellets in four years' time.

Hunters who use rarer, larger-bore guns, such as 10

and 8-bores, or smaller ones, such as 20-bores, will be exempt until suitable cartridges can be developed. But by 2000 these too should be subject to a lead shot ban.

The new agreement lays down the areas in which the ban will operate. They include estuaries, salt marshes, lakes, reservoirs, foreshores, gravel pits, ponds, rivers, marshes and seasonally flooded land, including water meadows. An exclusion zone around these areas will also operate, given

that lead shot can travel up to 300 metres when fired. Farmers indulging in a spot of rough shooting on dry land will be exempt.

The phasing-out, which will begin in September 1995, will be voluntary. However, John Holmes, of the vertebrate ecology and conservation branch of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in Peterborough, the Government's nature conservation advisers, warns that legal powers will be sought if hunters flout the

agreement. He says: "We want to take the shooters and everyone involved with us."

The move to ban lead shot follows two years of talks between a wide range of organisations such as conservationists, officials at the environment department and shooting bodies. They have been in discussions since a meeting organised by the International Wildfowl and Wetlands Bureau, in Brussels in 1991.

It was called following

mounting evidence that many species of wetland and wading birds can be poisoned by lead shot, an estimated 160 tons of which is discarded in Britain and more than 4,000 tons in the European countryside annually, causing paralysis and a lingering death.

The dangers were highlighted by a case earlier in 1993 when 27 whooper swans at a pond near Jedburgh in the Borders died as a result of lead poisoning. David Rolfe, a veterinary surgeon based at Berwick, found that some of the birds were carrying between 56 and 58 lead pellets in their livers. Lead levels in the birds' livers ranged up to 250 parts per billion, or nearly ten times a toxic dose.

Birds of prey which feed on wildfowl can also suffer, Mr Holmes says. "Positive evidence for this has come from marsh harriers in the Camargue. Lead levels here were consistent with levels found in poison-baited eagles in the United States."

Environmentalists, mindful that the Netherlands and France mark swiftly put a lead shot ban in place, have been concerned at Britain's slower progress. But John Harradine, head of research at the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, near Wrexham, Chwyd, believes the timetable is realistic, and takes into account special circumstances.

Unlike in continental Europe, many British shooters have a tradition of using finely made but less robust weapons. The main alternative to lead shot is steel or soft iron. But conventional cartridges housing such metal pellets can

damage the barrels of many British guns and create a potentially hazardous build-up of pressure.

Dr Harradine says the domestic ammunition industry has needed time to develop new cartridges that protect the gun and control the burning times. There has been concern that steel shot cartridges could also be less effective than traditional lead shot, causing more birds to be wounded rather than killed. The new shot cartridges need to be made in such a way as to ensure they do not solve one problem only to create new ones, says Dr Harradine.

Ammunition makers are confident that they will have solved these issues and have the necessary manufacturing technology in place to meet demand at a cost-effective price.

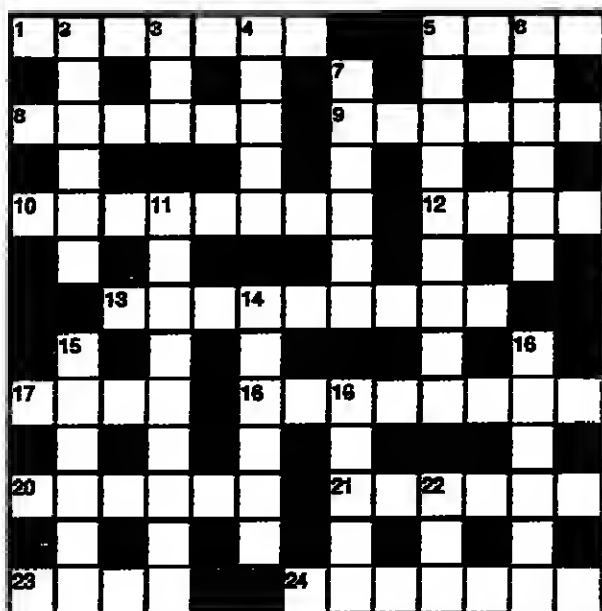
Stephen Dales, managing director of Game-bore — Cartridge Company in Hull, one of the companies developing the new ammunition, says the solution is a wad or plastic cup installed in the cartridge which envelopes the steel shot. He says: "It's a bit like a bucket with the shot inside. The cup has slits down the side. As it emerges from the barrel, wind resistance takes over and the plastic peels back like the petals of a flower, releasing the steel shot."

Bismuth and tungsten have also been tested but the costs of the cartridges are high, and making the shot is a highly specialised process.

Mr Dales says that companies have also looked at coating lead pellets with a non-toxic material. He says: "Unfortunately the glazing of a wildfowl bird is quite harsh as it is full of grit. So whatever coating is put on would be worn away."



By the turn of the century hunters may be barred from using lead shot, which can kill in more ways than one.



CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: The Times Concise Crosswords — Books 1 & 2 (Special Edition 240 puzzles) £5.74 each. Books 3 & 4 £4.25 each. The Times Jumbo Crosswords — Book 1 £5.25, Book 2 £5.99, Concise Book 1 £5.99. The Times Crosswords — Books 1 to 13 £4.74 each, Books 14 to 16 £4.25 each. The Sunday Times Crosswords — Books 1 to 10 £4.74 each, Book 11 £4.25, Concise Books 1 & 2 £4.25 each. Prices inc p&p (UK). Cheques to *Alamy Ltd*, 51 Manor Lane, London SE13 3QW. Return delivery. Tel 081-652 4575 (24 hrs). No credit cards.

Just released from Times Books. The Times Crosswords — Book 17. The Times Concise Crosswords — Book 5. The Sunday Times Crosswords — Book 12. £4.25 each (inc p&p).

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 57

ACROSS

- 1 Organisation to help the needy (7)
- 5 Author of *Prisoner of Zenda* (4)
- 8 Thrifty (6)
- 9 — ergo sum (Descartes) (6)
- 10 By the Julian calendar (3,5)
- 12 Fibber (4)
- 13 One supplying items of knowledge (9)
- 17 Nine days' Queen (4)
- 18 Flattery (4,4)
- 20 Foully decomposing (6)
- 21 Challenge (truth of) (6)
- 23 American farm labourer (4)
- 24 Item of personal property (7)

DOWN

- 2 Obstruction, temporary fence (6)
- 3 Mat (3)
- 4 Box (slang) (5)
- 5 Mountainous Gaelic area of Scotland (9)
- 6 Shorthand pioneer (6)
- 7 Funny person; subject of Munch picture (6)
- 11 Jewish High Court (9)
- 14 Legally able to play ball (6)
- 15 Ruler of England, but not of its waves (6)
- 16 Negotiate in bazaar (6)
- 19 Confidence, loyalty (5)
- 22 Lobster trap (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 56

ACROSS: 7 Ready 8 Utrecht 9 Compost 10 Vernal 11 Nose 12 Tarragon 13 Gingival 16 Sere 19 Barge 21 Immense 22 Edifice 23 Lucky

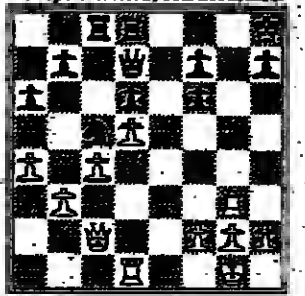
DOWN: 1 Brecon 2 Parmesan 3 Pylon 4 Bravura 5 Scan 6 Stalin 8 Ultramarine 13 Guernica 14 Siberia 15 Goblet 17 Evelyn 18 Small 20 Rail

By Raymond Keene

Today's position is from the game Tchakiev - Watson, Lloyds Bank, London 1993. White's heavy pieces are lined up against the broken black kingside. Can you spot the killer blow?

Send your answers on a postcard with your name and address to: The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine book. The answer will be published next Saturday. Solution to last Saturday's competition: 1 - Rat.

Last week's winners are A R Robbins, Ottery St Mary, Devon; R Gedling, Exeter; R M Simpson, Bishops Cleeve, Hertfordshire.



By Philip Howard

ABLUDE

- a. To spoil sport
- b. To wash
- c. To differ

BLUEISM

- a. Feminine learning
- b. Athletic heartiness
- c. Congenitally feeling the cold

VERVET

- a. Ribbed velvet
- b. A troubador's lyric metre
- c. A monkey

WHILLYWHA

- a. A cold mountain wind
- b. An Amerindian sledge
- c. A wheedling person

Answers on page 13



JANUARY SALE

COMMENCES

Tuesday
4th January

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teenager

Laurie
Taylor o
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